

# NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL

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## THESIS

### U.S PARTICIPATION IN BALKAN PEACEKEEPING: THE RICE PROPOSAL

by

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December 2001

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**U.S. PARTICIPATION IN BALKAN PEACEKEEPING: THE RICE PROPOSAL**

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the  
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## **ABSTRACT**

This thesis analyzes the “Rice Proposal”—Condoleezza Rice’s October 2000 suggestion that U.S. ground forces be withdrawn from the peacekeeping operations in the Balkans, with their responsibilities transferred to European allies. It examines the factors that caused the proposal to be articulated, and follows its development over the course of the early phases of the Bush administration. While the Rice Proposal remained a long term policy goal for the Bush administration, by July 2001 President Bush and his advisers had concluded that U.S. troops would remain in the Balkans as long as other NATO forces did. This conclusion derived in large part from the need to maintain NATO’s political cohesion, U.S. leadership in the alliance, and stability in Europe. One of the consequences of the 11 September 2001 terrorist attacks on the United States may, however, be a revival of the Rice Proposal.

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>I.</b>	<b>INTRODUCTION.....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>A.</b>	<b>PURPOSE.....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>B.</b>	<b>THE RICE PROPOSAL .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>C.</b>	<b>THE DOMESTIC DEBATE.....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>D.</b>	<b>THE EUROPEAN DEBATE .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>E.</b>	<b>METHODOLOGY .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>II.</b>	<b>U.S. BALKAN PRESENCE AND THE RICE PROPOSAL .....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>A.</b>	<b>THE BALKAN CONFLICT .....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>B.</b>	<b>UNITED STATES INVOLVEMENT IN THE BALKANS.....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>C.</b>	<b>THE RICE PROPOSAL .....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>III.</b>	<b>THE DOMESTIC DEBATE.....</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>A.</b>	<b>MILITARY READINESS .....</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>B.</b>	<b>THE U.S. ROLE.....</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>C.</b>	<b>THE ROLE OF THE MILITARY.....</b>	<b>40</b>
<b>D.</b>	<b>POTENTIAL DIVISIONS WITHIN THE BUSH ADMINISTRATION .....</b>	<b>45</b>
<b>IV.</b>	<b>THE NATO DEBATE.....</b>	<b>49</b>
<b>A.</b>	<b>EVOLUTION OF THE NATO ALLIANCE .....</b>	<b>49</b>
<b>B.</b>	<b>RISK SHARING .....</b>	<b>54</b>
<b>C.</b>	<b>CRITICALITY OF THE UNITED STATES TO NATO.....</b>	<b>55</b>
<b>D.</b>	<b>TIMING.....</b>	<b>59</b>
<b>E.</b>	<b>STRATEGIC SHIFTS .....</b>	<b>63</b>
<b>F.</b>	<b>POSSIBLE CONSEQUENCES OF THE TERRORIST ATTACKS ON 11 SEPTEMBER 2001.....</b>	<b>66</b>
<b>V.</b>	<b>ANALYSIS .....</b>	<b>71</b>
<b>A.</b>	<b>PRESIDENT BUSH IN KOSOVO .....</b>	<b>71</b>
<b>B.</b>	<b>DOMESTIC IMPETUS.....</b>	<b>72</b>
<b>C.</b>	<b>DOMESTIC APATHY.....</b>	<b>73</b>
<b>D.</b>	<b>INTERNATIONAL REALITIES.....</b>	<b>75</b>
<b>E.</b>	<b>MISSILE DEFENSE .....</b>	<b>76</b>
<b>F.</b>	<b>VIOLENCE IN THE BALKANS .....</b>	<b>77</b>
<b>G.</b>	<b>POSSIBLE EFFECTS OF THE 11 SEPTEMBER 2001 TERRORIST ATTACKS .....</b>	<b>78</b>
<b>VI.</b>	<b>CONCLUSION .....</b>	<b>81</b>
	<b>INITIAL DISTRIBUTION LIST .....</b>	<b>85</b>

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## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1. Effect of Peace Operations on Unit Training Readiness, by Amount of Overlap Between Unit's Skills for Peace Operations and Conventional War.....	27
Figure 2. Effect of Peace Operations on Unit Readiness, by Type of Unit .....	28

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This thesis analyzes the “Rice Proposal,” a statement by Condoleezza Rice in October 2000 widely viewed as a Bush administration campaign promise to end U.S. ground force participation in peacekeeping operations in the Balkans. The thrust of her argument was that peacekeeping missions, especially those in the Balkans, are detrimental to U.S. military preparedness. Rice contended that the role of the U.S. military should be solely to combat major threats around the world. The thesis surveys the development of the Rice Proposal, which has remained an implicit policy goal of the Bush administration if not an actual policy, and examines the U.S. and NATO debates over the proposal.

In the United States, some commentators have argued that the performance of peacekeeping missions does not prepare troops for combat, while others have contended that peacekeeping missions represent useful military training. This argument is actually an extension of a larger dispute over the United States role in the world. What principles and priorities should guide U.S. foreign policy? Does the United States, as the world’s sole superpower, have an obligation to police the world, intervening against aggression and injustice? Or should America restrain itself and act only when its interests are threatened? The debate over the U.S. role in the world is closely related to one about the appropriate roles of the U.S. military. Some Americans wonder if participation in small-scale contingency operations is suitable to the current mission, training and structure of the U.S. military.

The possibility of a U.S. withdrawal from participation in peacekeeping operations on the ground in the Balkans goes right to the heart of the NATO alliance. It is cause for great concern among alliance members due to NATO’s evolving nature. NATO spent the 1990’s evolving from a purely collective defense organization to one that also undertakes missions in support of collective security on a selective basis; and the prospect of a U.S. withdrawal of ground forces from the very region that helped redefine NATO has seemed a betrayal to some Europeans. The Rice Proposal’s “division of labor” would have European and Canadian troops doing all of the work on the ground in

the Balkans while U.S. forces would provide intelligence and logistics support. Such a division of labor could undermine risk sharing, which has been a guiding principle of NATO since its inception; if the United States is unwilling to place its troops at risk, the alliance's political cohesion could suffer.

NATO's experiences in Bosnia and Kosovo have demonstrated that American strength and leadership are truly vital to NATO's operations, but NATO's European members will be unlikely to accept that leadership if the United States is unwilling to keep troops on the ground. The timing of such a withdrawal appears inappropriate, because violence has resurged in the Balkans (notably in Macedonia) and the Bush administration's shift in strategic interest from Europe to Asia has made Europeans nervous about the reliability of the U.S. commitment to NATO. For these reasons and others, it seemed in July 2001 that the Bush administration had indefinitely postponed (and perhaps even discarded) the Rice Proposal. The 11 September 2001 terrorist attacks on the United States and the allied response have, however, caused it to resurface.

The thesis determines that while the Rice Proposal apparently came about as a result of domestic politics, the violence in the Balkans, coupled with U.S. voter apathy and pressures within the NATO alliance, apparently led to its abandonment—at least until 11 September 2001. The terrorist attacks have created more compelling reasons to transfer U.S. ground forces from the Balkans to other purposes. The thesis concludes with a recommendation that such a shift not be pursued, in the interests of maintaining NATO's political cohesion, U.S. leadership in the alliance, and political-military stability in Europe.



## **I. INTRODUCTION**

### **A. PURPOSE**

The purpose of this thesis is to analyze the “Rice Proposal,” a statement by Condoleezza Rice in October 2000 widely viewed as a Bush campaign promise to end the U.S. military presence in the Balkans. This proposal raised contentious issues. Commentators in the United States and abroad described the proposal as something that could destroy the United States relationship with Europe.

### **B. THE RICE PROPOSAL**

On the campaign trail, Governor George W. Bush, the Republican presidential nominee, drew attention to differences between his policies and those of his rival, Vice President Al Gore, the Democratic nominee. To this end, his security advisor, Condoleezza Rice, gave an interview on 20 October 2000 that spelled out Bush’s vision on the use of the military. The thrust of her argument was that peacekeeping missions, especially those in the Balkans, are detrimental to U.S. military preparedness.

The governor is talking about a new division of labor. The United States is the only power that can handle a showdown in the Gulf, mount the kind of forces that is needed to protect Saudi Arabia and deter a crisis in the Taiwan Straits. And extended peacekeeping detracts from our readiness for these kinds of global missions.<sup>1</sup>

Rice contended that the role of the U.S. military should be solely to combat major threats around the world.

This comes down to function.... Carrying out civil administration and police functions is simply going to degrade the American capability to do the things that America has to do. We don’t need to have the 82<sup>nd</sup> Airborne escorting kids to kindergarten.<sup>2</sup>

According to Rice, the United States would provide logistic and intelligence support, but European forces should provide the ground troops for peacekeeping operations in Europe. This shift would allow the United States to prepare for the major conflicts that may demand U.S. military action. This proposal has subsequently been

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<sup>1</sup> Condoleezza Rice quoted in Michael R. Gordon, “Bush Would Stop U.S. Peacekeeping In Balkan Fights,” *The New York Times*, 21 October 2000, p. A1.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

modified, but it retained its basic form at the time of George W. Bush's inauguration as president in January 2001, and it has become a major point of contention in both the United States and Europe.

### **C. THE DOMESTIC DEBATE**

In the United States, the debate has concerned the question of preparedness. Some commentators have argued that the performance of peacekeeping missions does not prepare troops for combat. From this perspective, a tour in the Balkans degrades a unit's ability to accomplish combat missions. According to Jeff Le Roy, a U.S. soldier who served in the Balkans,

For the most part, American soldiers do nothing but sit in our base camps and play video games and sports, trying to occupy the huge quantities of free time and boredom. We cannot train or practice warfighting and, as a result, our skills seriously erode. We proved this when we returned home and needed an eight-month retraining period before we could be certified as combat ready for war.<sup>3</sup>

Others have contended, however, that peacekeeping missions represent useful military training. Such missions are certain to be more numerous in the future, they argue, and service in the Balkans could enable U.S. troops to develop the skills necessary to respond to such contingencies. In this sense, Balkan peacekeeping might actually improve readiness.

This argument is actually an extension of a wider debate about the United States role in the world that has occupied pundits for years. Should the United States try to police the world? Is America morally obligated to send troops all over the world in defense of human rights? In late 1995, when the Dayton Accords were negotiated, the military and the public were wary of an open-ended commitment of U.S. forces, especially in an area where the conflict seemed so intractable. To reassure these groups, the Clinton administration placed a time limit on U.S. troop deployment in Bosnia. As Steve Chapman has noted, "When Clinton sent those troops to Bosnia, Americans were assured that their presence would not be required on a permanent basis."<sup>4</sup> Indeed, President Clinton said that the conditions created by IFOR would

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<sup>3</sup> Jeff Le Roy, "Priorities Are Misplaced In The Balkans," *USA Today*, 26 October 2000, p.15.

<sup>4</sup> Steve Chapman, "Should We Be In The Balkans Forever?" *Chicago Tribune*, 26 October 2000.

help to create a secure environment so that the people of Bosnia can return to their homes, vote in free elections and begin to rebuild their lives. Our Joint Chiefs of Staff have concluded that this mission should and will take about one year.<sup>5</sup>

Some decry the fact that U.S. troops are still in the Balkans, but others applaud it, and are unconcerned by such long-term commitments.

The Rice Proposal can be seen as an extension of the Powell Doctrine, which is actually a variant of the Weinberger Doctrine. The Powell Doctrine holds that, when considering the use of U.S. forces abroad, U.S. leaders must abide by the following principles:

(1) Commit only if our or our allies' vital interests are at stake. (2) If we commit, do so with all the resources necessary to win. (3) Go in only with clear political and military objectives. (4) Be ready to change the commitment if the objectives change, since wars rarely stand still. (5) Only take on commitments that can gain the support of the American people and the Congress. (6) Commit U.S. forces only as a last resort.<sup>6</sup>

This became known as the Powell Doctrine because of General Colin Powell's firm espousal of its tenets, and because of his insistence on "overwhelming and decisive"<sup>7</sup> force in any test of arms involving the U.S. military. Some contend that this approach implies a limited role for the United States armed forces in most military conflicts. That is, the United States would take a selective approach to committing its forces, and would avoid involvement in conflicts peripheral to its interests. The U.S. military role would be limited to intelligence and support functions in such cases. Critics of the Powell Doctrine contend that the types of major conflict for which the doctrine seems suited are not characteristic of modern conflict. In this view, the Powell Doctrine consists of lessons learned from old wars that will never be fought again. As a part of its analysis of the U.S. debate, the thesis reviews indications that divisions within the Bush administration on these issues may be present, with Condoleezza Rice and Colin Powell

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<sup>5</sup> President Clinton's remarks on Bosnia, transcript in *The New York Times*, 28 November 1995, p. A6, quoted in David S. Yost, *NATO Transformed: The Alliance's New Roles in International Security* (Washington, D.C.: United States Institute for Peace Press, 1998), 219.

<sup>6</sup> Colin Powell with Joseph E. Persico, *My American Journey* (New York: Random House, 1995), 303.

<sup>7</sup> Colin Powell quoted in "Powell Discusses With Senators His Views On Using Force," *The Buffalo News*, 18 January 2001, p. A4.

on one side in seeming opposition to the views favored by such figures as Dick Cheney. U.S. opinion leaders (politicians, officials, journalists, experts and others) are certainly divided on these issues, and the U.S. internal debate will have a great impact on the final outcome.

#### **D. THE EUROPEAN DEBATE**

The European debate will also have a significant impact on U.S. decision-making. When the Soviet Union crumbled in 1991, Yugoslavia's disintegration supplied NATO with a new mission. Rather than opposing a monolithic enemy, NATO would now be the means by which European stability would be assured. The European Union's initial steps in the Balkans were faltering and ineffectual, and it ultimately took United States leadership and presence to bring some modicum of stability to the region.

Many Europeans within and outside NATO nations were appalled that the United States would consider withdrawing its ground forces from the peacekeeping missions in Bosnia and Kosovo, after having led the processes that stabilized the Balkans. Part of this sentiment is based on the desire to see all members of the Atlantic Alliance share the risks and responsibilities—the basis of America's relationship with its European allies for the last fifty years. To pull U.S. troops out of the Balkans just as tensions are starting to mount again, notably on the Kosovo-Macedonia frontier, would be a serious blow to that relationship. European officials said in October 2000 that the Rice Proposal

could divide the NATO alliance, undermine the current European effort to increase its military capacity and question the postwar rationale for NATO's existence, which has revolved around the Balkans.<sup>8</sup>

Many Europeans also believe that European NATO members are simply not capable of handling the challenges without the United States, and point to the history of the Balkan conflict as evidence.

Another argument centers on timing. Slobodan Milosevic, the person widely regarded as responsible for the decade of violence in the Balkans, had just been deposed in October 2000, and a new and promising democratic regime led by Vojislav Kostunica was taking his place. Was that truly the proper time for the United States to begin

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<sup>8</sup> Steven Erlanger, "Europeans Say Bush's Pledge To Pull Out Of Balkans Could Split NATO," *The New York Times*, 25 October 2000.

discussions about withdrawing its troops? Critics argued that such a move could destabilize the Yugoslav regime at a delicate time in its evolution as a Western-oriented democracy. Others are worried about how relations with the Russian troops in SFOR and KFOR would be managed without the participation of U.S. troops. Russia does not willingly submit to the authority of the NATO command structure, and prefers to deal with U.S. authorities.

Another issue at stake is the looming question of missile defense, a *cause célèbre* that has agitated many Europeans, Russians and Chinese. President Bush's plans for missile defense would require the United States to withdraw from the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty or work with Russia to amend that treaty or negotiate a new agreed framework. This move has caused consternation, as the ABM Treaty has often been cited as the cornerstone of strategic stability during the last thirty years. It can be argued that redefining the military modalities of U.S. commitments in the Balkans is not the best way to garner support for such a huge departure from established treaty frameworks for strategic relations between Moscow and Washington. The European debate is complex and wide-ranging, and will greatly affect America's ultimate decision.

## **E. METHODOLOGY**

This thesis utilizes both primary and secondary sources, with an emphasis on current news and interviews, as the debate is still ongoing. The thesis is organized in the following manner: Chapter Two examines the Rice Proposal itself, its origins, and its evolution up to the present. Chapter Three reviews the debate in the United States. Chapter Four analyzes the debate in Europe, most notably in NATO countries, but also in key non-NATO countries. Chapter Five assesses the impact of both domestic and international pressures regarding the Rice Proposal. Chapter Six offers conclusions.

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## II. U.S. BALKAN PRESENCE AND THE RICE PROPOSAL

This chapter sets the stage for an analysis of the political dynamics determining the fate of the Rice Proposal by examining the origins of the U.S. military presence in the Balkans. It considers the breakup of the former Republic of Yugoslavia before turning to the U.S. presidential campaign of 2000, in which the Rice Proposal first emerged. It considers the forces that may have influenced the proposal's genesis, and then examines the evolution of the proposal throughout the campaign and the initial months of the Bush administration, setting out the facts that later chapters interpret.

### A. THE BALKAN CONFLICT

This thesis begins its analysis of the Balkan conflicts in the late 1980's, when Serb nationalism was once again on the rise. In 1987, the Serb Academy of Arts and Sciences published its *Memorandum*, which asserted that "over the last 20 years 200,000 Serbs had already been 'forced to leave' Kosovo."<sup>9</sup> The *Memorandum* further stated that "the physical, political, legal and cultural genocide of the Serbian population in Kosovo and Metohija is a worse historical defeat than any experienced in the liberation wars waged by Serbia."<sup>10</sup> The force of Yugoslav leader Josip Broz Tito's personality had largely held ethnic strife among the Muslims, Serbs, and Croats in check, but the years after his death in 1980 saw a rise in nationalist sentiment. The Serb Academy's *Memorandum* was a stark and powerful expression of this sentiment, and served to galvanize Serb opinion.

Initially, the Yugoslav communist leadership condemned the *Memorandum*, and Serb Communist Party leader Slobodan Milosevic said it represented "nothing else but the darkest nationalism."<sup>11</sup> After his denunciation of the *Memorandum*, Serb President Ivan Stambolic asked Milosevic to go to Kosovo in June 1987 to quell unrest, and prevent Serb protesters from carrying their battle to Belgrade. While witnessing a clash between Kosovo police and protesting Serbs, Milosevic apparently had a change of heart.

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<sup>9</sup> Tim Judah, *The Serbs: History, Myth and the Destruction of Yugoslavia* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997), p. 158.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., p. 159.

<sup>11</sup> Milosevic quoted in *ibid.*, p. 160.

He yelled out to the protesting Serbs, “no one should dare beat you.”<sup>12</sup> With this sentence, Milosevic became a champion of Serb nationalism, which he exploited to garner support for his own political agenda. He soon consolidated power in Serbia, becoming president in 1989. On the way, he used his new influence to amend the Yugoslav constitution, revoking the autonomy of Kosovo and Vojvodina; to place loyalists at the head of the Serb media; and to launch a propaganda blitz that glorified the Serbs and demonized the other ethnic groups in the Balkans. He appeared to be moving ever closer to establishing a Serb-run Yugoslavia.<sup>13</sup>

In June 1989, after becoming president of Serbia, Slobodan Milosevic presented himself as the savior of all Serbs in a ceremony at *Kosovo Polje*, known as the “Field of Blackbirds.” 28 June 1989 marked the six-hundredth anniversary of the Battle of Kosovo. It was on this day in 1389 that Serb Prince Lazar suffered a “glorious defeat” in his struggle against the invading Ottomans. Lodestones in the Serb national psyche, *Kosovo Polje* and the anniversary of the Battle of Kosovo provided the perfect backdrop for Milosevic to whip the million-strong audience into a nationalist frenzy. He warned them that, once again, they were beset by enemies. “Six centuries later, again we are in battles and quarrels. They are not armed battles, though such things cannot be excluded yet.”<sup>14</sup>

Soon enough, armed battles came about, when both Croatia and Slovenia declared their independence from Yugoslavia on 25 June 1991. Milosevic, as the Serb president in a Serb-dominated military and federal structure, was able to essentially dictate the actions of the Yugoslav National Army (JNA).<sup>15</sup> The JNA waged a short-lived war against Slovenia, which had a small Serb minority, but the conflict in Croatia turned out to be more difficult. Serbs in Croatia, inflamed by Serb nationalist rhetoric and alarmed by the rise of Croatian nationalism (including the revival of the World War II Croatian flag, used by the Croatian Ustashas who persecuted Serbs during the war), began fighting to remain a part of Yugoslavia. The violence lasted until January 1992, when the member

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<sup>12</sup> Milosevic quoted in *ibid.*, p. 162.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.162-164.

<sup>14</sup> Milosevic quoted in *ibid.*, p. 164.

<sup>15</sup> Noel Malcolm, *Bosnia: A Short History* (New York: New York University Press, 1994), p. 225.



states of the European Community recognized the independence of Croatia and Slovenia, and the United Nations (UN) was able to negotiate a peace settlement. Encouraged by the independence of Croatia, Bosnia held a referendum on independence on 29 February 1992. The result was overwhelmingly for independence (without the votes of the Bosnian Serbs, who boycotted the referendum), and this led to an immediate declaration of independence from the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.<sup>16</sup> The result was a complex conflict among the Serbs, Muslims, and Croats in Bosnia—with the participation of Zagreb and Belgrade—that lasted until the Dayton Accords of November 1995.

The initial responses by external powers to this conflict were limited. In September 1991, the UN Security Council (UNSC) placed an arms embargo on the whole of Yugoslavia, one which continued after the Croatian conflict had ended and the Bosnian conflict had begun.

Although the UN itself recognized Bosnia and admitted it as a member-state distinct and separate from Yugoslavia on 22 May 1992, it continued to apply the embargo as if nothing had changed.<sup>17</sup>

Noel Malcolm writes that the “biggest single contribution by the West to the destruction of Bosnia” was its continued enforcement of this embargo.<sup>18</sup> The Bosnian Serbs had access to the arms and resources provided by the JNA, were continually being supplied by Belgrade, and held territory with many arms factories, while the Bosniaks—also known as Bosnian Muslims—were basically unarmed.

The external response extended to supporting UNSC resolutions condemning the violence, then to sanctions with UNSC Resolution 757(1992) on 30 May 1992. This resolution applied “wide-ranging sanctions on the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia [meaning Serbia and Montenegro].”<sup>19</sup> These economic sanctions did not settle the conflict. After UN representative Cyrus Vance was able to negotiate a peace settlement in Croatia, the Security Council established a UN Protection Force (UNPROFOR) with

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<sup>16</sup> Ibid., p. 233.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., p. 243.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., p. 242.

<sup>19</sup>“United Nations Protection Force: Background,” p. 5.  
[http://www.un.org/Depts/DPKO/Missions/unprof\\_b.htm](http://www.un.org/Depts/DPKO/Missions/unprof_b.htm)

UN Resolution 743 in February 1992. Its goal was to “create the condition of peace and security required for an overall settlement of the Yugoslav crisis.”<sup>20</sup> UNPROFOR’s mandate was gradually expanded after hostilities intensified in Bosnia, and UNPROFOR units became responsible for ensuring the delivery of humanitarian assistance “to Sarajevo and wherever needed in other parts of Bosnia.”<sup>21</sup> While performing this mission, UNPROFOR troops were to follow normal peacekeeping rules of engagement, which authorized them to use force only in self-defense.<sup>22</sup>

Later UNSC resolutions also demanded that ethnic cleansing be stopped, established a no-fly zone over Bosnia, and created “safe areas” in which UN troops were supposed to guarantee the safety of a city’s residents. As the conflict wore on, however, the Serbs continued to conduct ethnic cleansing and to violate “safe areas.” By January 1993, the no-fly zone had been violated on nearly four hundred occasions.<sup>23</sup>

UN diplomacy created a “doctrine of equivalence—an assumption that all parties to a conflict must be treated equally, with *prima facie* rights and claims.”<sup>24</sup> This ensured that the Bosniaks, despite a massive military inferiority, enjoyed no special consideration from UNPROFOR. This neutrality had the effect of favoring the Serbs, since the weakness of the UN forces and the “doctrine of equivalence” denied them the option of effectively enforcing their narrowly circumscribed mandates in the face of Serb opposition. According to David Rieff,

the defining moment of the war was when a UN spokesman told a Sarajevo press conference that a cease-fire had been agreed to and he wanted to thank the Serbs for their cooperation. The next moment everyone was knocked to the floor by incoming Serb artillery rounds.<sup>25</sup>

This type of event was typical of the first years of the war, as Serb forces flouted the no-fly zone, attacked “safe areas” and massacred the residents, and even murdered Bosnian

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<sup>20</sup> Ibid., p. 2.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid., p. 5.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid., p. 5.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid., p. 9.

<sup>24</sup> Noel Malcolm, “Bosnia and the West: A Study in Failure,” *The National Interest*, Spring 1995, p. 5.

<sup>25</sup> David Rieff, *Slaughterhouse: Bosnia and the Failure of the West* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1995), p. 194.

officials who were being escorted by UN representatives.<sup>26</sup> This inaction continued even after the evidence in the summer of 1992 of crimes against humanity such as those committed in the detention camp at Omarska.<sup>27</sup>

## **B. UNITED STATES INVOLVEMENT IN THE BALKANS**

The United States role was initially defined by the Bush administration. As the conflict broke out, President Bush said,

I don't care what the political pressures are. Before one soldier...is committed to battle, I'm going to know how that person gets out of there. And we are not going to get bogged down into some guerrilla warfare. We lived through that once.<sup>28</sup>

Unconvinced regarding a compelling U.S. interest in the region, President Bush refused to send in forces. He did recognize that antagonisms in certain parts of the Balkans were extremely volatile, and could lead to wider conflict. In December 1992, with this in mind, President Bush issued the so-called "Christmas Warning." In a letter to President Milosevic, President Bush warned that "in the event of conflict in Kosovo caused by Serbian action, the United States will be prepared to employ military force against the Serbians in Kosovo and in Serbia proper."<sup>29</sup> This warning was repeated in March 1993, just after President Clinton took office, when Secretary of State Warren Christopher stated, "we remain prepared to respond against the Serbians in the event of conflict in Kosovo caused by Serb action."<sup>30</sup> Aside from this rhetoric, however, the successive U.S. administrations did little until 1995.

To be fair to the Bush administration, it should be noted that the European Community was not inclined to have the United States enter the conflict.

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Luxembourg foreign minister Jacques Poos, speaking as chairman of the

<sup>26</sup> Ibid., p. 151.

<sup>27</sup> Mark Danner, "America and the Bosnia Genocide," *The New York Review of Books*, December 4, 1997, p. 59.

<sup>28</sup> Bush comments on 7 August 1992, quoted in *ibid.*, p. 58.

<sup>29</sup> Bush cited in John M. Goshoko, "Bush Threatens 'Military Force' If Serbs Attack Ethnic Albanians," *The Washington Post*, 29 December 1992, p. A10, quoted in David S. Yost, *NATO Transformed: The Alliance's New Roles In International Security* (Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press, 1998), p. 236.

<sup>30</sup> Secretary of State Warren Christopher quoted in Ivo H. Daalder and Michael E. O'Hanlon, *Winning Ugly: NATO's War to Save Kosovo* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 2000), p. 9.

EC Council of Ministers (composed of the foreign ministers of all the EC countries), said that it was “the hour of Europe,” and that “if one problem can be solved by Europeans, it’s the Yugoslav problem. This is a European country and it’s not up to the Americans and not up to anybody else.”<sup>31</sup>

President Bush was content to let the Europeans handle the problem; but, as evidence of atrocities surfaced, others were not. In 1992, the Democratic presidential candidate, Bill Clinton, demanded that “the administration push NATO to send fighter bombers to save Bosnians from ‘deliberate and systematic extermination based on their ethnic origin.’”<sup>32</sup> Yet, after reaching office, President Clinton did nothing substantive to stop this genocide. In the spring of 1993 he sent his Secretary of State, Warren Christopher, to meet with European leaders and propose “lift and strike” policies– to lift the arms embargo and to conduct air strikes against the Bosnian Serb forces–but the Europeans, who had troops on the ground in UNPROFOR that could suffer reprisals, refused to endorse these policies. The United States and the other NATO allies gradually accepted responsibility for enforcing the arms embargo and the no-fly zone, but U.S. leadership was still absent, and the violence continued.

When Serb shelling of the Sarajevo marketplace (a so-called “safe area”) resulted in the death of sixty-eight people on 6 February 1994, NATO was finally pushed into action. NATO planes shot down four Serb aircraft that were violating the no-fly zone. This was the alliance’s first use of deadly force, but it did little to stem the tide of violence. In July 1995, the Serbs began to shell other “safe areas” in earnest, and massacred thousands of Muslim men in Srebrenica. This atrocity (among other factors) seems to have finally convinced Western leaders, including U.S. President Bill Clinton, that serious action needed to be taken.<sup>33</sup> On 30 August 1995, NATO forces resolutely began attacking Serb positions, and continued until 14 September.<sup>34</sup> This action, coupled

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<sup>31</sup> Jacques Poos on the ITN News, June 28, 1991, quoted in James Gow, *Triumph of the Lack of Will: International Diplomacy and the Yugoslav War* (London: Hurst and Co., 1997), pp. 48, 50, cited in David Yost, *NATO Transformed*, p. 193.

<sup>32</sup> Danner, “America and the Bosnia Genocide,” p. 58.

<sup>33</sup> Ivo Daalder, *Getting to Dayton: The Making of America’s Bosnia Policy* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 2000), p. 73.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 131.

with a Croatian-Muslim ground offensive, created the necessary conditions for peace talks in Dayton, Ohio.

Forces from many countries, including several NATO members, participated in UNPROFOR. After the Dayton Accords, NATO led both the UNSC-authorized Implementation Force (IFOR) that assumed UNPROFOR's responsibilities in the Balkans and its successor after one year, the UNSC-authorized Stabilization Force (SFOR). The United States was the largest force provider for IFOR, supplying 16,200 troops in Bosnia and an additional 6,000 troops stationed outside Bosnia to support IFOR.<sup>35</sup> SFOR replaced IFOR a year later, and U.S. troop levels had been reduced to 8,500.<sup>36</sup> By 31 December 2000, that number had been further reduced to 4,125, and the most recent reductions have resulted in a presence of about 3,500 troops.<sup>37</sup>

On 24 March 1999, after a year of escalating Serb atrocities in Kosovo—the results of federal “crackdowns” on Kosovar Albanians that led to thousands of civilian deaths and hundreds of thousands of refugees—NATO conducted Operation Allied Force.<sup>38</sup> After years of inaction, NATO leaders seemed to have come to the conclusion that the unrest in the Balkans required swift and unified action. Initially predicted to be a short campaign, as with Operation Deliberate Force in the Bosnia conflict, Operation Allied Force rained bombs on Serbia for eleven weeks. Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic finally capitulated and signed a military-technical agreement with NATO, which was endorsed by UNSC Resolution 1244.<sup>39</sup> NATO led and supplied troops for the UNSC-authorized Kosovo Force (KFOR), beginning in June 1999.

As with the conclusion of the Bosnian conflict, U.S. forces have played a crucial role in KFOR. In addition to providing invaluable command and control assets, the

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<sup>35</sup> “Bosnia Peace Operation: Progress Toward Achieving the Dayton Agreement’s Goals,” United States General Accounting Office Report to the Chairman, Committee on Foreign Relations, U.S. Senate, May 1997. Document ID # GAO/NSIAD-97-132, p. 26.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid., p. 27.

<sup>37</sup> “Active Duty Military Personnel Strengths by Regional Area and By Country (309A),” Department of Defense, <http://web1.whs.osd.mil/mmid/military/miltop.htm>.

<sup>38</sup> Daalder and O’Hanlon, pp. 23, 231.

<sup>39</sup> “Kosovo: U.S. and Allied Military Operations,” Steve Bowman. Congressional Research Service, The Library of Congress, March 21, 2001, p. 7. Document Code IB 10027.

United States has supplied approximately 6,000 troops in the form of a mechanized infantry division. These troops have remained in Kosovo, patrolling the U.S. sector (with four other sectors being patrolled by British, French, German, and Italian forces) and working to pacify and stabilize the region.<sup>40</sup>

### **C. THE RICE PROPOSAL**

Until the U.S. presidential race of 2000, the general expectation within the Alliance was that U.S. participation in SFOR and KFOR would be of indefinite, and probably prolonged, duration. However, one of Governor Bush's primary campaign issues was the state of the U.S. military. He stated that

the current administration inherited a military ready for the dangers and challenges facing our nation. The next president will inherit a military in decline.... If called on by the commander-in-chief today, two entire divisions of the army would have to report "not ready for duty, sir."<sup>41</sup>

He contended that the current state of the military was a result of President Clinton's overextension, and vowed to be more circumspect when it came to committing U.S. troops.<sup>42</sup>

Governor Bush returned to the issue of the military in the second presidential debate on 12 October 2000. When moderator Jim Lehrer brought up the Balkans, Bush said,

I'd very much like to get our troops out of there.... I recognize we can't do it now, nor do I advocate an immediate withdrawal. That would be an abrogation of our agreement with NATO.<sup>43</sup>

This was a relatively innocuous statement—offensive to nobody. But when Governor Bush uttered his next sentence, he stepped into different territory: "But I think it ought to be one of our priorities to work with our European friends to convince them to

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<sup>40</sup> Ibid., p. 8.

<sup>41</sup> Comments by Republican Presidential Candidate George Bush on 14 September 2000, as broadcast on "The NewsHour with Jim Lehrer," 14 September 2000, MacNeil/Lehrer Productions transcript # 6854.

<sup>42</sup> Jodi Enda, "Despite Victory, Bush Will Have No Clear Mandate When He Moves To White House," Knight-Ridder Washington Bureau, 8 November 2000.

<sup>43</sup> Cragg Hines, "Trouble In The Balkans—For Al Gore," *The Houston Chronicle*, 25 October, 2000, p. A30.

put troops on the ground.”<sup>44</sup> This remark gave the impression that he misunderstood the make-up of NATO forces in the Balkans, since the United States supplied only about 11,400 troops out of the total NATO presence of about 65,000.<sup>45</sup> This debate supplied Bush with some credibility, because he fared better than expected in foreign policy; but his remark about the Balkans left many questions unanswered.

In the next presidential debate, on 17 October 2000, Governor Bush added that in his administration

the mission of the United States military will be to be prepared and ready to fight and win war, and therefore prevent war from happening in the first place. There may be some moments when we use our troops as peacekeepers, but not often.<sup>46</sup>

This statement, coupled with those from the previous debate, raised the question of what exactly a Bush foreign policy might look like.

On 20 October 2000, Governor Bush’s security adviser, Condoleezza Rice, provided a vision of that potential policy in an interview with *The New York Times*. To tie up the threads of Governor Bush’s comments, she said that

The Governor is talking about a new division of labor. The United States is the only power that can handle a showdown in the Gulf, mount the kind of force that is needed to protect Saudi Arabia and deter a crisis in the Taiwan Straits. And extended peacekeeping detracts from our readiness for these kinds of missions.<sup>47</sup>

The solution, she said, was for the Europeans to take up a greater share of the peacekeeping burden. She added that

the United States would continue to provide intelligence, help with communications, transport and do other logistical work after withdrawing its peacekeeping troops.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> Ibid.

<sup>45</sup> “Bush ‘Plan’ For Kosovo Shows Irresponsibility,” *The Palm Beach Post*, 24 October 2000, p. A14.

<sup>46</sup> Bush quoted in Paula Hess, “Condoleezza Rice Comments On Iraq Sanctions, Balkans,” United Press International, 17 January 2001.

<sup>47</sup> Condoleezza Rice quoted in Michael R. Gordon, “Bush Would Stop U.S. Peacekeeping In Balkan Fights,” *The New York Times*, 21 October 2000, p. A1.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid.

And, lest anyone get the impression that Bush would abandon America's European allies, she said that

We are not withdrawing from Europe...We are not withdrawing the kind of support we can provide, like air power. But when it comes to nation-building or civilian administration or indefinite peacekeeping, we do need for the Europeans to step up to their responsibilities. We are not going to do anything precipitous, but unless we set this as a firm goal we will never get it done.<sup>49</sup>

This interview introduced the Rice Proposal to the world, and the response was immediate. President Clinton's Chief of Staff, John Podesta, called it a "stunning about-face from the U.S. leadership of our NATO mission in the Balkans."<sup>50</sup> Vice President Al Gore, the Democratic presidential candidate, called the proposal a "big mistake," and went on to say that it was a "breathhtakingly short-sighted view of America's role in the world" that was "based on a profoundly flawed understanding of what NATO is all about."<sup>51</sup> European leaders also responded rapidly, and were aghast at the prospect of America's withdrawal from the Balkans. As Lawrence Kaplan described it, "the Europeans went ballistic."<sup>52</sup>

Such a torrent of negative response demanded some sort of amplification or clarification. In late October 2000, nervous European speculation finally resulted in a phone call to the Bush headquarters from NATO headquarters.

Bush campaign staff said Stephen Hadley, a senior defense adviser to the Republican candidate, received a call last week from NATO staff, which led to a discussion between him and Lord Robertson, NATO's secretary general. In the conversation, Mr. Hadley "reiterated and reinforced Governor Bush's long-held positions supporting NATO's actions in the Balkans."<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> Ibid.

<sup>50</sup> Former White House Chief of Staff John Podesta on "CNN Late Edition With Wolf Blitzer," 22 October 2000, CNN Transcript #00102200V47.

<sup>51</sup> Vice President Al Gore quoted in Laurence McQuillan and Susan Page, "Gore Tries Foreign Policy As Key To White House, Attacks Bush's Balkans Proposal As 'Big Mistake,'" *USA Today*, 23 October 2000, P. A6.

<sup>52</sup> Lawrence F. Kaplan, "Containment: Cheney versus Powell, Round Two," *The New Republic*, 5 February 2001, p. 19.

<sup>53</sup> Stephen Findler and Richard Wolffe, "US and Canada: Bush Seeks to Reassure NATO," *Financial Times* (London), 1 November 2000, p. 4.



Lord Robertson was “left with the impression that, if elected, Mr. Bush is prepared to move slowly on the issue of Balkan peacekeeping to avoid any early political crises with NATO.”<sup>54</sup> Hadley reinforced this argument by pointing out that Bush had actually helped President Clinton in May 2000 with his opposition to the Byrd-Warner bill.<sup>55</sup> This bill would have required the president to certify to Congress that the other NATO allies were meeting their commitments in Kosovo, and would have required Congressional approval to continue the U.S. troop presence in Kosovo beyond 1 July 2001.<sup>56</sup>

This seeming step backwards from the edge served to quiet some fears, but the questions persisted. In mid-November 2000, Condoleezza Rice, speaking at a conference on U.S. priorities for a 21<sup>st</sup> century security strategy, said that “‘we have got to take a hard look at the resources we are providing and the missions we are taking on’ in Kosovo and elsewhere.”<sup>57</sup> She added that it might be necessary to set up international police forces to perform peacekeeping duties.<sup>58</sup> These statements served to bring the proposal back to the spotlight, renewing fears of a withdrawal of U.S. ground forces.

These fears were calmed in December 2000 by General Colin Powell. When President-elect Bush announced Colin Powell as his selection for Secretary of State, Powell held a press conference to discuss the future Bush administration’s foreign policy.

Powell said the Bush administration planned to look at deployments in Bosnia and Kosovo and other overseas locations “and make sure those deployments are proper....Our armed forces are stretched rather thin, and there is a limit to how many of these deployments we can sustain.” Powell said the Bush administration would consult allies to see how U.S. soldiers deployed overseas on various peacekeeping missions could be replaced. “We’re not cutting and running,” cautioned Powell, “we’re going to make a careful assessment of it in consultation with our allies,

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<sup>54</sup> Michael R. Gordon, “NATO Chief Says Bush Aide Reassured Him On Balkan Stance,” *The New York Times*, 1 November 2000.

<sup>55</sup> James Traub, “The Bush Years: W’s World,” *The New York Times*, 14 January 2001, p. 28.

<sup>56</sup> Paul Kane, “Democrats Switch Votes, Dealing Byrd a Rare Loss: Four Senators Had Voted With Legendary West Virginian In Committee On Reining In Kosovo Mission,” *Roll Call*, 22 May 2000.

<sup>57</sup> “Shelton: Peacekeeping Missions Unavoidable,” *The Washington Post*, 17 November 2000, p.2.

<sup>58</sup> Elaine Sciolino, “Bush Aide Hints Police Are Better Peacekeepers Than Military,” *The New York Times*, 17 November 2000.

and then make some judgments after that assessment is completed.”<sup>59</sup>

The delivery of such a message, from such a respected and experienced person, helped to allay fears. Powell’s remarks were followed a few days later by statements from Condoleezza Rice that President Bush would respect U.S. obligations to the allies, and that nothing “will be done one-sidedly and without the consultation with the European allies.”<sup>60</sup> Rice even denied that Bush ever contemplated a withdrawal from Balkan peacekeeping commitments.<sup>61</sup>

With this soothing policy message, the Bush administration was able to calm fears through the period leading up to the inauguration. When asked just before the inauguration if he planned on pulling out troops immediately after taking office, he answered, “No, I’m not.”<sup>62</sup> He pledged that “he would consider any reduction in US peacekeeping troops in the Balkans only after careful review and consultation with allies in Europe.”<sup>63</sup> This sentiment was echoed in February 2001 by Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld at the 37<sup>th</sup> Munich Conference on Security Policy, when he told his fellow ministers that the United States would “not act unilaterally, or fail to consult our allies.”<sup>64</sup> Secretary of State Colin Powell also declared in February 2001 that “there is no exit date for the whole force either in Bosnia or in Kosovo. Those will be long-term commitments.”<sup>65</sup> Powell added that the United States would “‘avoid any steps that would jeopardize’ the alliance’s unity.”<sup>66</sup>

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<sup>59</sup> Colin Powell quoted in “US Troop Deployments Overseas To Be Reviewed: Powell,” Agence France Presse, 16 December 2000.

<sup>60</sup> “New Administration To Respect Its Obligations At Balkans: Rice,” ONASA News Agency, 19 December 2000.

<sup>61</sup> Paula Hess, “Condoleezza Rice Comments On Iraq Sanctions, Balkans,” United Press International, 17 January 2001.

<sup>62</sup> Bush quoted in David R. Sands, “Bush Says He Would Consult Allies On Any Troop Pullouts,” *The Washington Times*, 19 January 2001.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid.

<sup>64</sup> Barry Schweid, “Powell Pledges Balkan Troop Commitment,” *Chattanooga Times*, 28 February 2001, p. A6.

<sup>65</sup> Remarks by Secretary of State Colin Powell on ABC’s “This Week,” 5 February 2001, transcript in “Rice And Powell Say There Is Not Target Date For Balkans Withdrawal,” *The Bulletin Frontrunner*, 5 February 2001.

<sup>66</sup> Barry Schweid, “Powell Pledges Balkan Support,” *Dayton Daily News*, 28 February 2001, p. 48.

Yet, on 14 March, CBS Evening News reported that the United States was beginning its withdrawal from the Balkans.

Taking its first concrete steps toward pulling American forces out of the Balkans, the Bush administration has developed a plan that would cut back the 4,400 U.S. troops still in Bosnia by about 80 percent. The plan does not affect the 5,600 U.S. troops next door in Kosovo.... Under the Bush administration plan, troops would turn the labor-intensive job of conducting daily foot patrols to keep the streets safe over to civilian police and would only be responsible for preventing an outbreak of fighting.... U.S. officials say that would allow the Pentagon to cut the number of American troops in Bosnia in half. That would be followed by another cut to roughly 1,000 American troops who would serve only as monitors, watching for any signs of a resurgence of ethnic violence. Officials say the timing of this phased withdrawal would depend on events, but it could begin at once with the pullout of an 800-man force, including Apache helicopters, and be completed within two years.<sup>67</sup>

This report was accompanied by the beginning of a force reduction from 4,400 troops to 3,500. U.S. Department of Defense spokesman Rear Admiral Craig Quigley said that the reduction was part of a six-month review that was concluded in December 2000, and that the decision to reduce the number of U.S. troops in Bosnia was also made in December 2000.<sup>68</sup> The timing of the force reduction, so soon after American assurances, raised once again the specter of the Rice Proposal.

In response, the Bush administration denied that this reduction was part of an overall plan to withdraw U.S. ground forces from Bosnia.<sup>69</sup> The troop withdrawal was characterized as merely the removal of non-essential personnel, and it was performed with the consent of NATO allies. It did not imply that the United States was abandoning the Balkans. The media, however, saw the move as a portent of things to come, and there was much speculation as to the next United States move.<sup>70</sup>

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<sup>67</sup> David Martin, "President's Plan To Pull Troops Out Of Bosnia," CBS Evening News, 14 March 2001.

<sup>68</sup> "Roundup: U.S. Reduces Troop Deployments In Bosnia," Deutsche Presse-Agentur, 15 March 2001.

<sup>69</sup> Comments from White House Spokeswoman Mary Ellen Countryman, in "Roundup: U.S. Reduces Troop Deployments in Bosnia," Deutsche Presse-Agentur, 15 March 2001.

<sup>70</sup> "London, Berlin, Paris, Washington: Looking At The New President," *Europe*, March 2001, p. 18.

This move came, once again, in the form of a declaration by Secretary of State Colin Powell. In a demonstration of U.S. commitment to the Balkans, Secretary Powell attended the April 2001 meeting of the Balkan Contact Group. The Contact Group was established in 1994, and is made up of representatives of the United States, France, Britain, Italy, Germany, and Russia. At the Contact Group meeting in Paris, Secretary Powell placed the administration's most recent moves into perspective.

We are constantly reviewing our troop levels in both SFOR and KFOR....The United States has made some reductions recently to bring us down to authorized levels, and we are constantly talking to our friends in NATO and others who are present in the region to see how best to perform the mission. But there is no end point.... We are looking for opportunities to draw down, but not for opportunities to bail out.<sup>71</sup>

Secretary Powell's next move was to visit the Balkans and to reassure the regional governments that the United States is committed to fulfilling its political-military obligations in the area. In Macedonia, the focal point of the most recent troubles, he told President Boris Trajkovsky, "you can be sure of American support of your efforts—political support, economic support, and military support."<sup>72</sup>

With these last statements, the Rice Proposal might seem to be finished. Rice's initial proposal was seemingly incendiary, and was widely interpreted to mean the end of U.S. ground force involvement in the Balkans. This was mostly because of the phrase "new division of labor," and because of Governor Bush's insistence that the U.S. military be used to fight wars, not to conduct peacekeeping operations. The immediate outcry caused Bush to reaffirm his support for the U.S. role in fulfilling NATO's obligations in the Balkans.

Periodically, though, both as Governor and as President, George W. Bush has expressed a preference for the reduction of U.S. ground forces in the Balkans, and the outcry has resumed. One could view this cycle as "flip-flopping" on a sensitive issue, but in fact the history of the issue shows that the Rice Proposal has been relatively consistent. President Bush and his advisors would evidently prefer to reduce the U.S. troop presence

<sup>71</sup> "Colin Powell Holds Q&A Session," Federal Document Clearing House Political Transcripts, 11 April 2001.

<sup>72</sup> Robin Wright, "Powell Visits Macedonia In Major Shift Of U.S. Policy," *The Los Angeles Times*, 13 April 2001, p. A4.

in the Balkans. In the face of European resistance, they have stated and restated their commitment to NATO and to the Balkans, but the goal has remained. The Bush administration has indeed begun to reduce the number of troops in the Balkans, and is seeking ways to continue this reduction. While these steps do not reflect the immediate ground force pullout that many feared when the Rice Proposal was first advanced, the basic direction that the proposal championed has been consistent.

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### III. THE DOMESTIC DEBATE

This chapter surveys the domestic debate over the U.S. military presence in the Balkans. Specifically, it looks at the issues of readiness, the U.S. role in the world, and the proper role of the U.S. military.

#### A. MILITARY READINESS

Military readiness is a key issue in the domestic debate over the Rice Proposal. One of the primary elements of Condoleezza Rice's argument against U.S. participation in peacekeeping operations was that they detract from readiness to conduct the large-scale operations for which the U.S. military is designed.<sup>73</sup> In this sentiment, Rice is not alone. Her views are shared by soldiers such as Lieutenant Daniel Mauro, U.S. Army, who wrote in the *New York Times*,

As an Army officer serving in Kosovo, I can tell you from firsthand experience that our operations in the Balkans are extremely damaging to our ability to survive and succeed in combat.<sup>74</sup>

Every day spent in the Balkans is a day in which soldiers cannot train in such areas as large unit coordination and combined operations. Soldiers engaged in peacekeeping often carry live ammunition, but seldom have the opportunity to train with their weapons. There are shooting ranges available, and plenty of ammunition, but soldiers rarely have the time to practice between their patrols.<sup>75</sup> For those who need to practice with large weapons such as .50 caliber guns or mortars, there are no ranges. A tour in the Balkans for many soldiers means a complete absence of some vital training.<sup>76</sup>

For others, Kosovo supplies what troops deem to be unnecessary training. Staff Sergeant Christopher Callan of the 1<sup>st</sup> Infantry Divisions said, "I was trained as an infantryman, not to apprehend robbers or stop traffic accidents, which is what I do day-

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<sup>73</sup> Michael R. Gordon, "Bush Would Stop U.S. Peacekeeping In Balkan Fights," *The New York Times*, 21 October 2000, p. A1.

<sup>74</sup> Lieutenant Daniel P. Mauro, Letter to the Editor, *The New York Times*, 21 October 2000, p. A30.

<sup>75</sup> Interview on 2 August 2001 with an Army Special Forces Major who has served in the Balkans on three separate tours.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid.

to-day in Kosovo.”<sup>77</sup> Work assignments are even less satisfying for those who pull duty inside the base camps, according to an Army special forces major:

Guys on the base camps had a Ground Hog Day mentality. Susie gas pumper put on her body armor, helmet, and weapon (with no ammo) every day, walked in the mud to her filling station, stayed there for several hours, then went back to the rack.<sup>78</sup>

Other day-to-day missions involve standing guard at churches, watching the traffic pass, or patrolling remote outposts; and much of a soldier’s time is spent playing cards.<sup>79</sup>

The inevitable result of (a) the inability to conduct traditional training and exercises and (b) the execution of routine domestic-order tasks is a reduction in unit readiness to conduct war. According to a Congressional Budget Office study published in December 1999, “surveys of Army leaders who took part in peace operations suggest a drop in training readiness for conventional war after participation in peace operations.”<sup>80</sup> U.S. Representative Ander Crenshaw (R-FL) wrote,

Indeed, earlier this year [2001], the Army rated the readiness status of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Division at the second-lowest level because its role in the peacekeeping mission in Bosnia prevented...maintaining its combat proficiency.<sup>81</sup>

Recognition of current readiness problems extends to the highest levels of the military chain of command, and was even acknowledged by General Henry Shelton, then Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, in September 2000,

Our forces are showing increasing signs of serious wear. Anecdotal, initially, and now measurable evidence, indicates that our readiness is

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<sup>77</sup> Staff Sergeant Christopher Callan, quoted in John C. Hulsman, “Dispelling Myths About America’s Role In Kosovo,” *VFW Magazine*, April 2001, p. 20.

<sup>78</sup> Email from an Army Special Forces Major, dated 01 August 2001.

<sup>79</sup> Thomas E. Ricks, “U.S. Military Police Embrace Kosovo Role,” *The Washington Post*, 25 March 2001, p. 21.

<sup>80</sup> “Making Peace While Staying Ready for War: The Challenges of U.S. Military Participation in Peace Operations,” Congressional Budget Office, December 1999.  
<http://www.cbo.gov/showdoc.cfm?index=1809&sequence=4>.

<sup>81</sup> Representative Ander Crenshaw, “Reassessing The U.S. Approach To Peacekeeping,” *The Will*, 23 May 2001.



fraying and that the long-term health of the total force is in jeopardy.<sup>82</sup>

General Shelton did not attribute this problem solely to peacekeeping. Reductions in force size, shrinking defense budgets, and ageing equipment have taken their toll; but peacekeeping has certainly contributed to it.

It is arguable that with fewer than 10,000 U.S. soldiers in the Balkans, the impact on overall readiness is minimal; but the impact is not felt only by those deployed.

“[O]ur research suggests that the costs are significantly higher than the relatively small number of troops involved would imply,” says Thomas McNaugher, deputy director of Army studies at [the] RAND Corp. Because the army has to cherry-pick specialized units from all over its force structure to augment its major peacekeeping forces...such operations tend to break up the established hierarchy of the Army, which is still organized around combat divisions and the conventional warfighting mission.<sup>83</sup>

When one segment of a unit is detached and sent to Kosovo, it means that both the segment and the parent unit are unable to perform certain large-scale training events, bringing overall readiness down.

Additionally, the cost of peacekeeping operations can affect the combat readiness of troops back in garrison, including units that do not supply soldiers for deployment on peacekeeping missions. Even prior to the U.S. deployment of peacekeepers in the Balkans, members of Congress were raising questions about peacekeeping missions.

By using Pentagon accounts to pay for the invasion of Haiti and other unplanned operations, Republicans contend, peacekeeping is reducing military readiness by giving Congress little choice but to approve funding for missions already underway.... Training accounts were so low last fall [1994], said Representative Ron Weldon, R-PA, that 600 troops from the 2<sup>nd</sup> Armored Division at Fort Hood near Killeen, Texas, were walking across fields pretending to be tanks because there wasn't enough money for fuel and maintenance.<sup>84</sup>

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<sup>82</sup> Comments by Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Henry Shelton, quoted in *The NewsHour* with Jim Lehrer, 14 September 2000, Transcript #6854.

<sup>83</sup> James Kitfield, “The Peacekeepers,” *Government Executive*, March 2001, p. 44.

<sup>84</sup> Jim Landers, “Peace Missions Under Attack: Are We The World’s Keeper?” *Dallas Morning News*, 2 April 1995, p. 1J.

The adverse effects of peacekeeping operations on readiness appear to be recognized throughout the military. To refute these assertions, though, others point to evidence suggesting that peacekeeping missions have not taken too much of a toll.

About 350 soldiers, most from the 1<sup>st</sup> AD [Armored Division], are participating in the [Allied Command Europe Rapid Reaction Corps] exercise. The division is currently commanding the Kosovo Force peacekeeping mission and participating in other international training events. But even though the division is a bit spread out, it hasn't affected its ability to participate in this exercise. [Major General George W.] Casey, [Jr.] said specialists and sergeants have been able to complete tasks during this mission usually handled by captains and majors.<sup>85</sup>

In other words, if U.S. soldiers can still participate effectively in routine training exercises with foreign armies, their readiness must not be severely impaired.

Many others see positive results for U.S. military readiness from peacekeeping missions. While there are certainly many repetitive and unexciting jobs to be performed in the Balkans, there are also missions that utilize a soldier's training.

Peacekeeping in Kosovo not only means staffing checkpoints and escorting frightened Serbian civilians to market, schools, and hospitals in Albanian areas. It also involves armed patrols along the rugged boundary with Serbia, actions that are intended to stop the flow of arms, food, and supplies to Albanian insurgents.<sup>86</sup>

Such missions require teams to work together perfectly, and the uncertain nature of peacekeeping operations can sharpen vital decision-making skills. "Army commanders who have returned from the Balkans testify that in small units, such as platoons, troops demonstrated overwhelming improvements in their wartime skills while deployed on these operations."<sup>87</sup> According to Captain Tom Hairgrove, U.S. Army, the commander of Outpost Snapper along the Kosovo-Serbia proper border, skills in conventional tactics can be honed in the Balkans: "Everything we're doing here—the procedures we follow,

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<sup>85</sup> Richelle Turner Collins, "NATO Troops Proving No Mission Impossible," *European Stars and Stripes*, 25 October 2000, p. 4.

<sup>86</sup> Michael R. Gordon and Steve Erlanger, "Troops Say Kosovo Duty Sharpens Their Skills," *New York Times*, 18 January 2001.

<sup>87</sup> Evelyn N. Farkas, "A Mission That Keeps Our Forces Strong," *Washington Post*, 14 January 2001, p. B3.

the placement of defensive positions, the constant surveillance of the border—are exactly as we would do in a defensive position in high-intensity combat.”<sup>88</sup>

In such cases, an overlap exists between the skills needed for combat and those needed for peace operations. However, according to the previously cited 1999 Congressional Budget Office study, the vast majority of Army units surveyed saw few such overlaps, as Figure 1 illustrates.

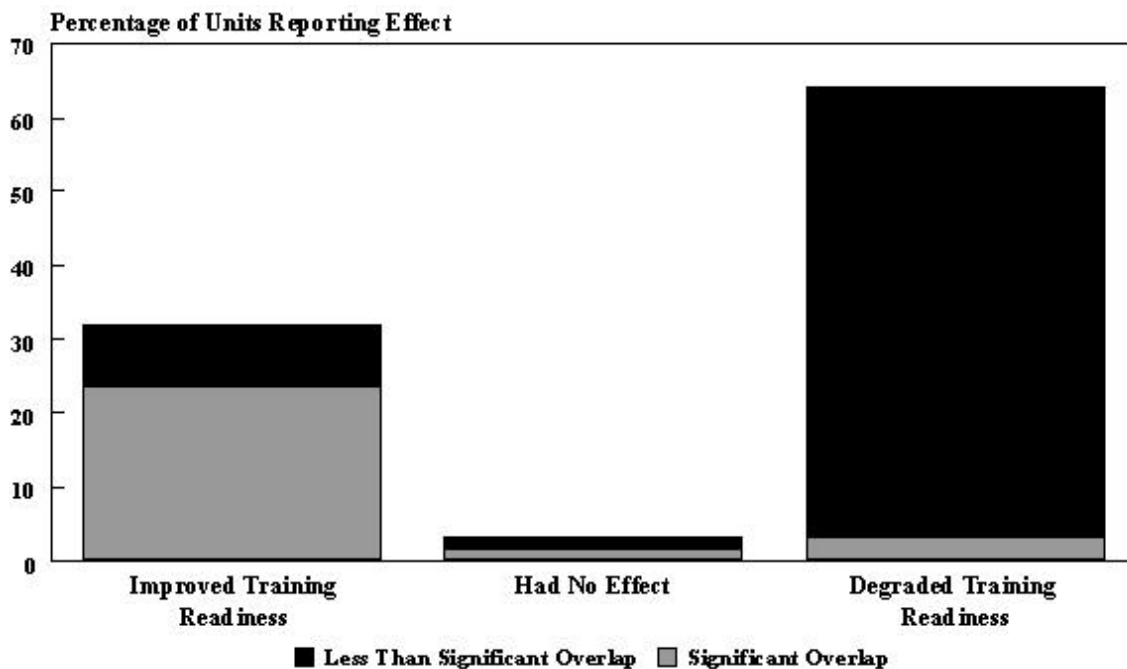


Figure 1. Effect of Peace Operations on Unit Training Readiness, by Amount of Overlap Between Unit’s Skills for Peace Operations and Conventional War. (From “Making Peace While Staying Ready for War: The Challenges of U.S. Military Participation in Peace Operations,” Congressional Budget Office, December 1999.)

Personnel in support functions, who do not normally need to sharpen direct combat skills, gain significant training from a deployment to the Balkans, as noted in Figure 2. Conducting their jobs in such adverse conditions, these personnel become “skilled at levels that cannot be replicated at their permanent bases.”<sup>89</sup> Additionally, the military’s special forces have been able to practice skills in the Balkans that are expected to translate directly to other types of conflict.

<sup>88</sup> Comments by Captain Tom Hairgrove, quoted in Kitfield, p. 44.

<sup>89</sup> Farkas, p. B3.

Peacekeeping operations produce a new cadre of seasoned individuals who will prove valuable in any conventional war. Civil affairs, public affairs, psychological operations, special operations, and military police personnel all benefit tremendously from the operations in the Balkans.<sup>90</sup>

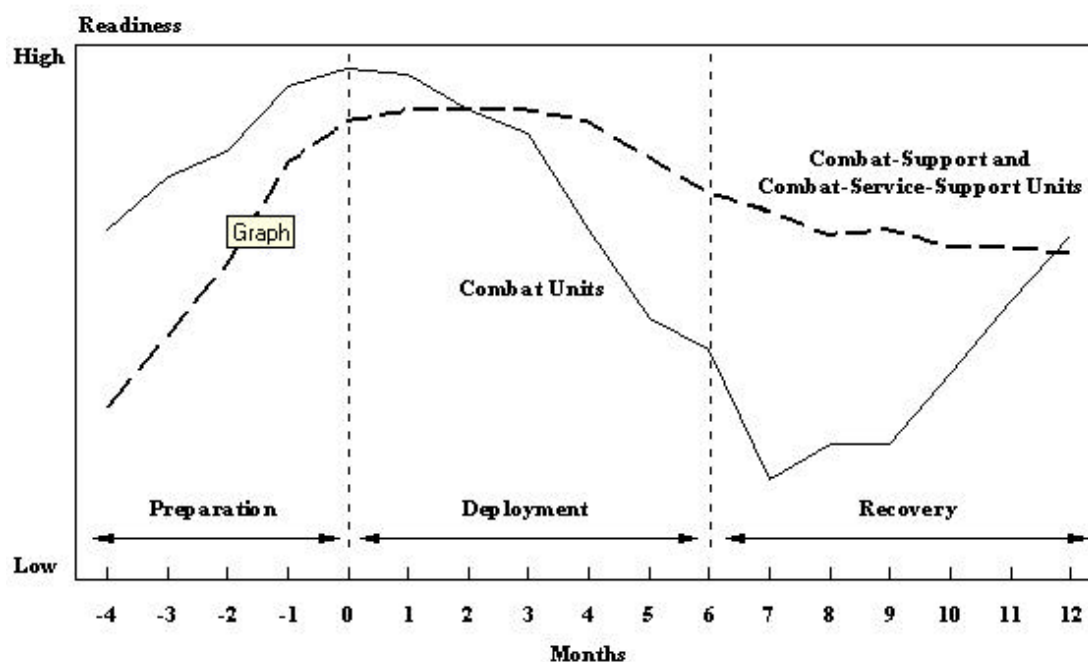


Figure 2. Effect of Peace Operations on Unit Readiness, by Type of Unit. (From: “Making Peace While Staying Ready for War: The Challenges of U.S. Participation in Peace Operations,” Congressional Budget Office, 1999.)

Some also argue that the standards by which readiness is currently measured are no longer valid.

Those stuck in the past complain that duty in the Balkans prevents the U.S. military from meeting arbitrary and unrealistic ‘readiness’ standards and training schedules that are still geared to repelling Soviet armies at the Fulda Gap.<sup>91</sup>

Since the threat of massive war with the Soviet Union is no longer relevant, they maintain, perhaps it is time to come up with a new standard of measurement. Certainly, those standards worked when the time came to use the Cold War military to defeat Iraq in the 1990-91 Persian Gulf War. That military no longer exists, however, and a survey of the last decade raises the question of whether new standards are not required. In that

<sup>90</sup> Farkas, p. B3.

<sup>91</sup> Jim Hoagland, “Honor Our Troops In The Balkans,” *The Washington Post*, 27 May 2001, p. B7.

light, perhaps duty in the Balkans is actually ideal training for the future of modern combat.

According to Brigadier General Kenneth Quinlan, U.S. Army, the Commander of Task Force Falcon,

We are getting every ounce of training value here in Kosovo. Kosovo is good for our army, not just good for Kosovo, not just good for the Balkans stability. This is sergeants' time every day here in Kosovo. They are in charge. They have live ammunition. They have an unpredictable threat they face every day. They make decisions on the spot. You can't replicate that.<sup>92</sup>

General Quinlan recognizes that the opportunity cost of developing these individual skills is that company and division level skills erode, and he estimates that it will take three months for deployed soldiers to regain those skills. The bottom line, however, is that "if his troops were called on to fight...they would be ready to go to war."<sup>93</sup>

## **B. THE U.S. ROLE**

The debate over peacekeeping effects on readiness is really part of a larger dispute over the United States role in the world. What principles and priorities should guide U.S. foreign policy? Does the United States, as the world's sole superpower, have an obligation to police the world, intervening against aggression and injustice? Or should America restrain itself and only act when its interests are threatened? The debate has continued since the country's founding. Barbara Conry characterized the divisions of views in the 1990's as follows:

One school of thought, loosely associated with the Clinton administration and the Democratic Party, advocates exercising U.S. global leadership in a multilateral context to advance humanitarian or Wilsonian objectives. The other school of thought, loosely associated with the Republican Party, advocates unilateral U.S. leadership primarily for traditional realist-power and national security-objectives.<sup>94</sup>

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<sup>92</sup> Brigadier General Kenneth Quinlan quoted in Bill Glauber, "Balkans Mission Sharpens Soldiers," *Baltimore Sun*, 26 March 2001.

<sup>93</sup> Brigadier General Kenneth Quinlan quoted in indirect discourse in Gordon and Erlanger.

<sup>94</sup> Barbara Conry, "U.S. 'Global Leadership': A Euphemism For World Policeman," CATO Institute Policy Analysis No. 267, 5 February 1997. <http://www.cato.org/pubs/pa-267.html>

The modern interventionist perspective is often associated with the views of President Woodrow Wilson. After the horrors of World War I, President Wilson sought to establish an international organization dedicated to common values and principles. The League of Nations was founded on the idea that firm commitments to collective security would ensure that such a tragedy would never again befall the world. The United States Senate did not approve ratification of the Treaty of Versailles, a document which included the Covenant of the League of Nations, so the League was formed without the participation of the United States. The primary opponent of the treaty, Senator Henry Cabot Lodge, feared that it would force the United States to become a world policeman.<sup>95</sup>

The debate continued in the 1990's, with President Bill Clinton's espousal of an activist, ideals-centered foreign policy. In his first inaugural address, President Clinton said,

When our vital interests are challenged or the will and conscience of the international community is defied, we will act, with peaceful diplomacy whenever possible, with force when necessary.<sup>96</sup>

Pricking the conscience of the "international community" at the time were images of suffering in Somalia, Bosnia and Haiti. The results were international efforts to alleviate these problems, with mixed success.

In April 1992, the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) approved Resolution 751, which established the UN Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM) to provide humanitarian aid to the Somalis suffering starvation in the midst of a civil conflict.<sup>97</sup> Under President Bush, United States forces participated in UNSC-authorized Operation *Provide Relief*, which lasted from 15 August 1992 to 9 December 1992.<sup>98</sup> On 4 December 1992, President Bush announced that U.S. forces would be undertaking Operation *Restore Hope*, to provide humanitarian relief and to restore order under the

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<sup>95</sup> Kitfield, p. 44

<sup>96</sup> President Clinton's first inaugural address, quoted in Landers, p. J1.

<sup>97</sup> Kenneth Allard, *Somalia Operations: Lessons Learned* (Washington, D.C.: National Defense University Press, 1995), p. 14.

<sup>98</sup> Ibid., p. 14.

authorization of UNSC Resolution 794, which also authorized the formation of the UN Task Force (UNITAF).<sup>99</sup> The UNSC authorized the formation of UNOSOM II in March 1993, which was to take over for UNITAF after the 38,000 UNITAF troops (of which 28,000 were American) restored order.<sup>100</sup>

In this instance, the resolution also called for the building of a secure environment throughout the country, and endorsed the objective of rehabilitating Somalia's political institutions and economy. This was the first time the United Nations Security Council sought to interfere so deeply into the affairs of a member state.<sup>101</sup> One of the Somali clan leaders, Mohamed Aideed, felt threatened by the UNOSOM's mandate, and his forces killed 24 Pakistani peacekeepers in an ambush in June 1993. This prompted the UNSC to approve Resolution 837, which called for the apprehension of those responsible for the soldiers' deaths. UNOSOM II forces clashed with Somalis several times, and on 3 October 1993, 18 Army Rangers were killed and 75 were wounded. President Clinton soon announced that U.S. troops would leave Somalia in March 1994.<sup>102</sup> Somalia continues to experience extreme unrest, and is not an example of a successful UNSC-authorized operation.

The forces operating under UNSC auspices in Bosnia prior to the Dayton Accords were equally unsuccessful. The United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) had been authorized by the UNSC in the spring of 1992 to monitor the ceasefire in Croatia.<sup>103</sup> When violence escalated in Bosnia, the UNSC extended the UNPROFOR mandate to include Bosnia. In August 1992, the UNSC authorized member states to use "all measures necessary" to facilitate the delivery of humanitarian assistance."<sup>104</sup> Despite the imposition of no-fly zones and embargoes, UNPROFOR forces in Bosnia did not have the resources necessary to enforce their mandate, and instead watched helplessly as Serb forces conducted "ethnic cleansing" operations against the Bosniaks. The turning point

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<sup>99</sup> Ibid., p. 16.

<sup>100</sup> Ibid., p. 18.

<sup>101</sup> Ibid., p. 18.

<sup>102</sup> Ibid., p. 21.

<sup>103</sup> Richard N. Haass, *Intervention* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 1999), p. 42.

<sup>104</sup> Ibid., p. 42.

in Bosnia came in 1995, as evidence of Serb atrocities mounted and public outcry demanded action, eventually resulting in the U.S.-brokered Dayton Accords.

In Haiti, the United Nations Security Council sought to reinstall the country's first democratically elected president, Jean-Bertrand Aristide. President Aristide had been ousted in a coup staged by Lieutenant General Raoul Cédras, resulting in a humanitarian crisis in Haiti and a flood of refugees.<sup>105</sup> After years of negotiations, the United Nations and the Organization of American States (OAS) came to agreement with General Cédras on a peaceful transition back to legitimate government and the introduction of a UN Mission in Haiti.<sup>106</sup> When the mission personnel tried to land on Haiti from the USS *Harlan County*, they were opposed by Cédras supporters. In July 1994, President Clinton announced the formation of a U.S.-led Multinational Force (MNF), authorized by the UNSC to restore the Aristide regime to power.<sup>107</sup> As a result of last-minute negotiations with General Cédras by special envoy Jimmy Carter, the MNF landed with no opposition, and Aristide resumed control of the Haitian government.

This operation was lauded as a triumph of coordinated international action, and a victory for democracy over authoritarianism; yet within months of the MNF's arrival, political assassinations marred the reputation of the newly restored government.<sup>108</sup> President Aristide was constitutionally prevented from serving consecutive terms, and his successor was widely viewed as a puppet for Aristide and his Lavalas Family Party.<sup>109</sup> In November 2000, Mr. Aristide was reelected as president with a 92% majority, but the elections were tainted and widely considered to be a sham.<sup>110</sup> In fact, Representative Benjamin Gilman (R-NY) and Senator Jesse Helms (R-NC), then chairmen of the relevant House and Senate committees, urged after the election that Aristide not be allowed to attend a hemispheric summit meeting in April 2001,<sup>111</sup> and millions of dollars

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<sup>105</sup> Preston Niblack, *The United Nations Mission in Haiti: Trip Report* (Santa Monica: RAND, 1995), p. 4.

<sup>106</sup> Ibid., p. 5.

<sup>107</sup> Ibid., p. 5.

<sup>108</sup> Ibid., p. 6.

<sup>109</sup> Michael Norton, "Aristide Declared Haiti Winner," Associated Press, 29 November 2000.

<sup>110</sup> Ibid.,

<sup>111</sup> "U.S. Lawmakers Assail Haitian Elections," Associated Press, 8 December 2000.



in U.S. foreign aid were suspended pending review of the election results.<sup>112</sup> Recently, opposition party members in Haiti have been jailed, killed and harassed.<sup>113</sup> Despite the claims of victory for democracy in Haiti, events since 1994 lend little support to such beliefs.

In all of these cases, the common factor is that there was a genuine humanitarian crisis—people were starving, or being oppressed or exterminated. United States leaders, at the head of the most powerful nation in the world, felt compelled to act. In the Balkans, President Bill Clinton’s only action after entering office in 1993 was the “lift and strike” proposal—to lift the arms embargo and to conduct air strikes to compel the Serbs to cease hostilities—made by Secretary of State Warren Christopher, which was soundly rejected by European countries with troops in the Balkans.<sup>114</sup> President Clinton was reluctant to do more, because he feared U.S. entanglement in a long term, convoluted conflict on the order of Northern Ireland or Cyprus.<sup>115</sup> In 1995, as U.S. troops were preparing to deploy a peacekeeping mission in Bosnia, President Clinton said,

my duty as President is to match the demands for American leadership to our strategic interests and to our ability to make a difference.... We can’t do everything, but we must do what we can.<sup>116</sup>

This sentiment was echoed by NATO’s Supreme Allied Commander, Europe (SACEUR) from 1997 to 2000, General Wesley Clark, who said, “If you can make a difference, you should.”<sup>117</sup>

The seemingly frenetic pace of United States involvement in peace support operations can be seen as simply part of a global trend. Since the United Nations was established in 1945, it has authorized fifty-four peace support operations. Of these, two-

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<sup>112</sup> Michael Norton, “Haiti Opposition Members Released,” Associated Press, 25 August 2001.

<sup>113</sup> Ibid.

<sup>114</sup> Haass, p. 40.

<sup>115</sup> David Yost, *NATO Transformed: The Alliance’s New Roles In International Security* (Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press, 1998), p. 196.

<sup>116</sup> President Bill Clinton, quoted in “Clinton’s Words On Mission To Bosnia: The Right Thing To Do,” *The New York Times*, 28 November 1995, p. A14.

<sup>117</sup> NATO SACEUR General Wesley Clark, quoted in Brigadier General David L. Grange, USA (Ret), “Engagement Work,” *US Naval Institute Proceedings*, July 2001, p. 30.

thirds have been established since Desert Storm.<sup>118</sup> According to Joshua Muravchik, it is a “shibboleth that America cannot be the world’s policeman. In truth, it must be more than that. A policeman gets his assignment from higher authority, but in the community of nations, there is no authority higher than America.... America must accept the role of world leader.”<sup>119</sup> For proponents of this trend in U.S. policy, accepting the role of world leader means acting whenever human suffering demands it.

Critics of this approach view such criteria as missing a crucial factor: interests. *New York Times* columnist Thomas L. Friedman wrote in 1995: “I don’t give two cents about Bosnia. Not two cents.”<sup>120</sup> When the United States became involved in Kosovo, Friedman wrote, “The question we are wrestling with in Kosovo today is this: How should Americans react when bad things happen in unimportant places?”<sup>121</sup> This is a rather extreme formulation of the argument, but it brings to light the basic tenet of the interests-oriented approach to foreign policy, canonized by the Weinberger Doctrine: “Commit only when our or our allies’ vital interests are at stake.”<sup>122</sup> Throughout the Cold War, such questions were a little easier to answer. While debate still took place about specific interventions, the commonly accepted U.S. interest resided in aggressively opposing Communism, and this led to involvement all over the globe. In the post-Soviet international context, with no ideological enemy, it is more difficult to define interests justifying intervention. Many Americans, however, do not see a vital interest in the Balkans. A January 1993 Gallup poll found that only 24% of Americans felt that the United States should get involved in Bosnia,<sup>123</sup> and an April 1999 Gallup poll showed that only 34% of Americans viewed regional ethnic conflicts as critical threats.<sup>124</sup>

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<sup>118</sup> Ibid., p.31.

<sup>119</sup> Joshua Muravchik, *The Imperative of American Leadership* (Washington, D.C.: American Enterprise Institute, 1996), p. 1.

<sup>120</sup> Thomas L. Friedman, cited in Leon Wieseltier, “Force Without Force,” *The New Republic*, 26 April 1999.

<sup>121</sup> Ibid.

<sup>122</sup> Colin L. Powell with Joseph E. Persico, *My American Journey* (New York: Random House, 1995), p. 303.

<sup>123</sup> Siti Zuluakha Razaliki, “Intervention Issues In The Post Cold War,” <http://www.du.edu/~srazali/inter-po.htm>

<sup>124</sup> Lydua Saad, “Americans Support Active Role For U.S. In World Affairs, But Don’t View Ethnic Conflicts As Critical To U.S. Interests,” *Gallup News Service*, 1 April 1999.

The emphasis on vital national interests stems from the nature of the United States government. Because the United States is a democracy, the government is dependent on public support to prosecute conflicts. History has shown that U.S. citizens abhor the results of humanitarian crises, and feel the need to “do something.” When faced with the costs of intervention, however, this sentiment has little staying power.<sup>125</sup> In the words of Charles Krauthammer,

Americans will support purely humanitarian interventions *at the beginning*. Americans, more than the people of any other Great Power, have long believed that foreign policy must be infused with moral purpose, and they are as moved as any people by the plight of others.<sup>126</sup>

As the intervention stretches on and casualties ensue, however, this interest wanes.

This tendency is supported by evidence from Somalia. Before October 1993, Americans supported President Clinton’s handling of Somalia by a factor of two to one, but after 3 October 1993, 64% of Americans wanted to pull U.S. troops out.<sup>127</sup> By contrast, when faced with crises that truly affect vital national interests, the American public will be willing to bear the costs of defending those interests. Examples of such cases include both World Wars. Even in the 1990-91 Persian Gulf War, despite casualty estimates in the thousands, 78% of Americans supported action.<sup>128</sup> Certainly, President Clinton’s approach to the Kosovo conflict, in which he publicly refused to consider the use of ground forces in combat operations, reflected his belief that the American public did not see a vital interest in Kosovo, despite “widespread bipartisan criticism.”<sup>129</sup>

Implicit in this argument is what some people call the “body bag syndrome” or the “Vietnam syndrome.” The Weinberger Doctrine was prompted by the U.S.

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<http://www.gallup.com/poll/releases/pr990401.asp>.

<sup>125</sup> Lawrence F. Kaplan, “Colin Powell’s Out-Of-Date Foreign Policy,” *The New Republic*, 1 January 2001.

<sup>126</sup> Charles Krauthammer, “The Short, Unhappy Life of Humanitarian War,” *The National Interest*, Fall 1999, p. 7 (emphasis added).

<sup>127</sup> “Americans React To Fate Of U.S. Soldiers In Somalia,” *ABC News Nightline*, 5 October 1993.

<sup>128</sup> David W. Moore, “Americans Believe U.S. Participation In Gulf War A Decade Ago Worthwhile,” *Gallup News Service*, 26 February 2001. <http://www.gallup.com/poll/releases/pr010226.asp>.

<sup>129</sup> Senator John McCain (R-AR) in address to Georgia Public Policy Institute, 19 April 1999. <http://www.senate.gov/~mccain/csis.htm>

experience in Lebanon, where 241 U.S. Marines were killed in a truck bomb explosion in 1983. “The marines, not configured or equipped for combat, were in Lebanon on a fuzzily defined peacekeeping mission as what the State Department called an ‘interpositional force.’”<sup>130</sup> The American public knew little of the situation in Lebanon, but the consensus was that the mission was not worth 241 American lives. The same was true in Somalia.

As long as it was a feeding operation, there was popular support. But as soon as it turned into a nation-building operation with real fighting and real losses—eighteen Americans in one day—the game was up. The intervention had to be terminated.<sup>131</sup>

General Colin Powell’s espousal and interpretation of the Weinberger Doctrine resulted from a comparably ill-defined mission in Vietnam, which led to the loss of over fifty thousand Americans. While couched in terms of the Cold War struggle for predominance, the exact mission in Vietnam was unclear to many, and the lack of true commitment by political leaders led, in Powell’s estimation, to the tens of thousands of U.S. casualties that continue to scar the national psyche.

Many of my generation.... vowed that when our turn came to call the shots, we would not quietly acquiesce in halfhearted warfare for half-baked reasons that the American people could not understand or support.<sup>132</sup>

This is not to say that the American people cannot support an operation that involves casualties. But they must be convinced that the cause is worth the loss of American lives. According to Charles Krauthammer,

This is not, as some have argued, a blanket aversion to casualties, stemming variously from a decadence caused by prosperity, or a higher valuation placed on children of the smaller families of a low-fertility West. It is an aversion to casualties incurred purely for the benefit of foreigners.<sup>133</sup>

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<sup>130</sup> Kaplan, “Colin Powell’s Out-Of-Date Foreign Policy.”

<sup>131</sup> Krauthammer, p. 7.

<sup>132</sup> Colin Powell with Joseph E. Persico, *My American Journey* (New York: Random House, 1995), p. 149.

<sup>133</sup> Krauthammer, p. 7.

Regarding the Balkans, the polls have tended to validate the arguments of those who argue that the U.S. public has little interest in the region. “Public skepticism about sending our troops to Bosnia is consistent with this...polls have indicated that Americans do not believe that U.S. vital interests are at stake, and consequently support for the operation is weak.”<sup>134</sup>

A CNN/USA Today/Gallup poll in December 1995 found that 57% of Americans were not confident that the United States could accomplish its goals in Bosnia with few casualties.<sup>135</sup> In January 1997, 58% of Americans disapproved of the U.S. troop presence in Bosnia.<sup>136</sup> As mentioned earlier, public support for U.S. involvement in Somalia plummeted after U.S. forces took casualties, and a Gallup poll in April 1999 found that, while 61% of Americans supported NATO air strikes against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, only 31% supported the insertion of U.S. troops.<sup>137</sup> When those polled were asked why they supported ground troops, 67% chose a “moral obligation to help the refugees.”<sup>138</sup> However,

only 14% of Americans say the goal of returning Kosovar refugees to their homes with a lengthy military action is worth many American casualties...[and] 42% say it is not worth any American casualties at all.<sup>139</sup>

There is an obvious correlation between American casualties and public support for conflicts. This connection has affected not only the United States leaders in their decisions about when to deploy troops, but also the behavior of U.S. troops on their deployment. “And so the watchword for the American troops in Kosovo is ‘force protection.’”<sup>140</sup> Unlike their international brethren, U.S. peacekeepers in Kosovo always

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<sup>134</sup> Conry, p. 1.

<sup>135</sup> “Majority of Americans Oppose U.S. Troops In Bosnia,” *CNN*, 19 December 1995. [http://www.cnn.com/world/bosnia/updates/dec95/12-20bosnia\\_poll/951219bosnia\\_txt.1](http://www.cnn.com/world/bosnia/updates/dec95/12-20bosnia_poll/951219bosnia_txt.1).

<sup>136</sup> David W. Moore, “Americans Divided On U.S. Troops In Bosnia,” *Gallup News Service*, 24 December 1997. <http://www.gallup.com/poll/releases/pr971224b.asp>.

<sup>137</sup> Mark Gillespie, “Crisis In Kosovo: Questions And Answers About American Public Opinion,” *Gallup News Service*, 16 April 1999. <http://www.gallup.com/poll/releases/pr990414.asp>.

<sup>138</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>139</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>140</sup> Michael R. Gordon, “Looking Like War To Keep The Peace,” *The New York Times*, 4 February 2001.

wear full “battle-rattle”–Kevlar helmets and body armor, so that they will not be caught unprotected.<sup>141</sup> This preoccupation with force protection may minimize casualties, but some contend that it also interferes with accomplishing the peacekeeping mission. According to Peter Maas, a

reluctance to do the hard work on the ground has hobbled the U.S.-led peacekeeping force in Kosovo...Why has this happened? As in Bosnia, aggressive policing could expose the peacekeepers to greater danger, and the United States, which calls the shots, does not want any casualties.<sup>142</sup>

Thus, the U.S. government has walked a fine line in undertaking deployments to the Balkans. The Clinton administration employed the rhetoric of moral intervention but also utilized as much talk of “vital national interests” as it could to garner support for the mission. Aware that the U.S. public would not likely be willing to agree to a long commitment, President Clinton said in November 1995 that the peacekeeping deployment in Bosnia would last only a year.<sup>143</sup> Six years later, the U.S. presence in the Balkans has actually expanded in scope and responsibility, and the debate continues.

In March 1999, as NATO forces were prepared to launch an air war on the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, U.S. Senator Kay Bailey Hutchison (R-TX) voiced her support for peacekeeping in the Balkans. Mindful of the “body bag syndrome,” however, she proposed only temporary–and casualty-free–involvement.

I would support a plan that would...put our troops, along with our European allies in NATO, together in a peacekeeping mission of a short duration which would make sure that things settle down until we could have others rotate in and take our place.... I would...support a plan of helping the Kosovars, but without putting American troops in harm’s way.<sup>144</sup>

She wanted to help, but obviously did not see a real or enduring national interest in the Balkans. U.S. Senator John McCain (R-AZ), on the other hand, did. In April 1999, he said,

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<sup>141</sup> Ibid.

<sup>142</sup> Peter Maas, “Our Half-Baked Balkan Policy,” *The Washington Post*, 26 March 2001, p. A25.

<sup>143</sup> President Clinton’s remarks on Bosnia, transcript in *The New York Times*, 25 November 1995, p. A6, in Yost, p. 219.

<sup>144</sup> Senator Kay Bailey Hutchison (R-TX), “The Situation In Kosovo,” U.S. Senate floor statement, 22 March 1999. <http://www.senate.gov/~hutchison/kosovo.htm>

I sincerely believe that Serbia's assault on Kosovo did threaten our interests, and thus its defeat is a cause worth fighting for.... Milosevic's ambitions directly threaten two extremely important American interests: our global credibility and the long-term viability of the Atlantic Alliance.<sup>145</sup>

In October 2000, Presidential nominee Governor George W. Bush, well schooled in the traditional conservative view of U.S. application of force, said that he would consider using force based on a "strict interpretation of vital national interests."<sup>146</sup> When asked during the same debate about the guiding principles for the exercise of American force, his Democratic opponent, Vice President Al Gore, said, "I see it as a question of values."<sup>147</sup> In these two approaches, competing perspectives on America's role in the world can be seen. During the last decade, interventionist tendencies have on occasion prevailed,<sup>148</sup> but the current administration seems to embody aspects of the opposing perspective, and this could spell the end of U.S. participation in peacekeeping on the ground in the Balkans.

Part of this debate involves the issue of "nation building." The United Nations Charter states in Chapter I that the United Nations is "based on the principle of the sovereign equality of all its Members."<sup>149</sup> It also states that

All members shall refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state.<sup>150</sup>

What, then, should be done in the case of failed states, such as Somalia, or when a sovereign state commits crimes against humanity? The interventionist view holds that, in such a situation, the resultant crisis requires a humanitarian intervention in spite of

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<sup>145</sup> Senator John McCain (R-AR), address to Georgia Public Policy Institute, 19 April 1999. <http://www.senate.gov/~mccain/csis.htm>

<sup>146</sup> Governor George W. Bush, quoted in James Traub, "The Bush Years: W's World," *The New York Times*, 14 January 2001, p. 28.

<sup>147</sup> Ibid., p. 28.

<sup>148</sup> The most obvious example of U.S. non-interventions during this decade is, of course, Rwanda in 1994. One could, however, compile a list of conflicts in which the United States chose not to intervene, notably in Africa and the former Soviet Union.

<sup>149</sup> Charter Of The United Nations, Chapter I, Article 2, paragraph 1. [http://www.un.org/aboutun/charter/chapter\\_1.htm](http://www.un.org/aboutun/charter/chapter_1.htm)

<sup>150</sup> Ibid., Chapter I, Article 2, paragraph 4.

sovereignty issues, as in Kosovo. It is incumbent upon the United States, the interventionist holds, to try to ease the suffering of the people, and to work to build a functioning democratic state.

In contrast, the conservative approach looks first to national interests. According to Henry Kissinger's critique of such interventions, "There is a tendency to turn foreign policy into an attempt to stop humanitarian crises, rather than ask where we will be in ten years' time."<sup>151</sup> Conservatives see "nation building" as an endless task that will not be successful, because the people have not reached the stage at which democratic institutions can work. In Somalia, the UNSC-authorized forces tried first to ease suffering, then to stop the fighting, and ended up failing miserably. Conservatives point to this example, and to the recent troubles in the Balkans, as proof that the UNSC-authorized operations in the Balkans are also doomed to failure; the warring factions are simply not ready to live together. As a result of the NATO-led efforts, according to Richard Hart Sinnreich, "the Balkans remain on artificial life support."<sup>152</sup>

### **C. THE ROLE OF THE MILITARY**

The debate over the U.S. role in the world is closely related to one about the appropriate roles of the U.S. military. One of the Rice Proposal's premises is that the U.S. military exists primarily to conduct large-scale operations, such as the Persian Gulf War. So, the argument goes, should we be utilizing this force for small-scale contingency operations? According to Colin Powell,

we must always be mindful of the uniqueness of America's armed forces. We possess the only military in the world that can go anywhere, anytime, support ourselves over the long haul, and do it all in an overwhelming and decisive manner if need be. Tying down such forces is often imprudent.<sup>153</sup>

From this perspective, peacekeeping missions can be seen as a misuse of assets, in addition to the previously mentioned arguments concerning lowered readiness.

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<sup>151</sup> Henry Kissinger, quoted in "Where Do America's Interests Lie?" *The Economist*, 16 September 1999.

<sup>152</sup> Richard Hart Sinnreich, "It's Time For The West To Get Real About The Balkans," *Lawton Constitution*, 25 March 2001, p. 4.

<sup>153</sup> Comments by Secretary of State-designate Colin Powell at Senate Confirmation Hearings, quoted in James Mann, "Not Your Father's Foreign Policy," *The American Prospect*, 9 April 2001, p. 28.



Also, some observers question whether the military demands of Balkan peacekeeping are sufficiently elevated to require U.S. soldiers. In Bosnia, Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld said in May 2001,

The military job was done three or four years ago. We still have military people in there, and so do our friends and allies. I have an old-fashioned view. I think that the mission creep from the military role we went in to do, has migrated into the civil, what do you call it, police–civil order, I guess, is the phrase they use. And the reason that’s happened is because it is a lot easier and cheaper to use American military people than it is to take the tougher steps of seeing that the civil order side is developed and that there is an opportunity for the military to step away.<sup>154</sup>

In this sentiment, Rumsfeld is not alone.

As documentary producer Aaron Lukas put it: “What we are seeing in Kosovo is social work masquerading as defense policy.” One senior relief official described Kosovo as “the most expensive babysitting operation in the world.”... “It’s tactical day-care,” wrote *Chicago Tribune* reporter James O’Shea. “Soldiers direct traffic, escort people to the grocery store, guard churches and mediate disputes between Serbs and Albanians over things as mundane as the ownership of an apartment, a tractor, or even a cow.”<sup>155</sup>

Such tasks do not necessarily fit into the realm of the practical roles for a soldier.

“Inculcation of the warrior spirit [is] inherently inconsistent with successful peacekeeping operations,” pointed out Paula J. Dobriansky, Washington Director of the Council on Foreign Relations. “Waging war and maintaining peace require different skills.” The U.S. Army itself has said as much. A finding of an Army report circulated last September [2000] concluded that paratroopers “experienced difficulty tempering their combat mentality.” They were further criticized for their “overly aggressive tendencies”—the very instincts essential for surviving [and succeeding in] combat.<sup>156</sup>

Such assertions are supported by the response of troops trained in civil order tasks. Military police assigned to the Balkans as part of the overall U.S. presence are positive about their experiences.

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<sup>154</sup> Secretary of Defense Donald H. Rumsfeld in Thomas E. Ricks, “Post Interview With Donald H. Rumsfeld,” *Washingtonpost.com*, 20 May 2001.

<sup>155</sup> Hulsman, p.20.

<sup>156</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 31.

Of the roughly 5,600 U.S. troops in the peacekeeping mission in Kosovo, the happiest appear to be the 500 military police. They are at the center of the international effort, patrolling constantly and interacting with the population. The infantry and other combat units, by contrast, tend to hate it.<sup>157</sup>

The MPs, who are trained to perform exactly the tasks they are performing in Kosovo, are much more inclined to approve of the U.S. presence there.

Some observers, such as Condoleezza Rice, advocate the establishment of a large constabulary force, trained in exactly the sorts of civil mission required by peacekeeping operations.

There may be new roles for international forces of a different type when civil conflict is well beneath the place that combat forces are needed.... We need to think hard about the development of forces that are appropriate to police functions.<sup>158</sup>

This would allow the United States to withdraw its troops, and would put the job in the hands of personnel trained specifically for such a mission. The problem is that such a solution might not actually solve anything.

Maintaining the peace...might seem more like police work than a military mission. But the United Nations police force, made up of personnel from more than 50 nations, is too weak to control Kosovo, and the nascent Kosovo police are inexperienced and untested.<sup>159</sup>

Aside from weakness and inexperience, the newly formed police in the Balkans reportedly have other problems.<sup>160</sup>

The United Nations negotiated a contract with a Texas-based corporation, DynCorp Technical Services, to hire police personnel. The results have been mixed at best, with U.N. International Police Task Force personnel facing numerous charges of corruption, child abuse, misconduct, sexual impropriety, and trafficking in prostitutes.<sup>161</sup>

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<sup>157</sup> Thomas E. Ricks, "U.S. Military Police Embrace Kosovo Role," *The Washington Post*, 25 March 2001, p. 21.

<sup>158</sup> Condoleezza Rice quoted in Elaine Sciolino, "Bush Aide Hints Police Are Better Peacekeepers Than Military," *The New York Times*, 17 November 2000.

<sup>159</sup> Gordon and Erlanger.

<sup>160</sup> Alexandra Kroeger, "UN Policemen Disgraced In Bosnia," *BBC News*, 30 November 2000.

<sup>161</sup> Colum Lynch, "Misconduct, Corruption By U.S. Police Mar Bosnia Mission," *The Washington*

DynCorp pays handsomely for civilians to enter such a dangerous zone, and cannot afford to be overly discriminating in the face of personnel shortages. Also, many of the members of the UN police mission in Bosnia have diplomatic immunity from prosecution in Bosnia, eliminating the threat of punishment for inappropriate behavior—the penalty given one U.S. police officer for purchasing the “ownership” of a woman was simply dismissal.<sup>162</sup> Until a better method of recruiting international constabulary personnel is developed, such measures are not likely to provide an enduring solution. Also, it should be noted that the MPs are able to do their jobs with little difficulty only because of the presence of armed, reinforced soldiers. Especially in a region as volatile as Kosovo, an MP’s mission to maintain order could easily become impossible without the pacifying presence of armed patrols.

This brings to light a key aspect of the utility of military personnel in peacekeeping operations. “It should be remembered that peacekeeping missions are nothing short of military operations—with the potential for combat and loss of life.”<sup>163</sup> A peacekeeping operation can present a soldier with every task along the spectrum of combat, from routine guard duty to high-intensity combat, as recent attacks on peacekeepers in Kosovo have shown.<sup>164</sup> While a police or constabulary force can perform some of these duties, it has been soldiers who have consistently shown that they can operate along the full length of that spectrum.

Some Americans advocate using the military for peacekeeping duties because they have seen such “police missions” as among the conflicts most likely to be encountered in the future. In response to Secretary Rumsfeld’s remarks concerning the completion of the “military job” in Bosnia, U.S. Senator Joseph R. Biden (D-DE), the current Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, stated,

From Secretary Rumsfeld’s published remarks, I get the impression that he sees anything short of actual combat or the separating of warring parties as inappropriate tasks for our soldiers. If he does, I disagree with

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*Post*, 29 May 2001, p. A1.

<sup>162</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>163</sup> Farkas, p. B3.

<sup>164</sup> “Kosovo Peacekeepers Come Under Fire During Arms Swoop,” *Agence France Presse*, 14 August 2001, and Richard Beston, “NATO Troops Injured In Albanian Attack,” *London Times*, 1 February 2001.

him. In fact, this view strikes me as the old syndrome of “preparing to fight the last war.” The last two so-called “strategic concepts” of NATO have made clear that the most likely security challenges of the twenty-first century will be ethnic and religious strife, trans-national crime, terrorism and the like—rather than a frontal attack on the territory of alliance members.<sup>165</sup>

Finally, while some soldiers are unhappy with the missions and tasks in Kosovo, many others enjoy them. After being part of a training machine without a real enemy since the 1990-91 Persian Gulf War, the opportunity to do something with practical application appeals to many. In the words of Captain Joseph Cantello, “In the Army, you spend practically all of your time training. Here, we are executing a real-world mission.”<sup>166</sup> The concrete evidence of the widespread nature of this sentiment is that the reenlistment rates in forces deploying to the Balkans are higher than average. Indeed, the 1<sup>st</sup> Armored Division, which has been tasked heavily with operations in the Balkans, has the highest reenlistment rate in the Army.<sup>167</sup> While U.S. soldiers have not trained extensively to serve in missions such as those in the Balkans, they are doing an excellent job, and seem to be proud to do something of value.

A major element in the debate over the proper role of the U.S. military is the structure of the armed forces. Many of the arguments against the use of the armed forces for peacekeeping hinge on the fact that the U.S. military has been structured for more demanding purposes, including high-intensity combat. However, it has been argued that the current strategy behind force shaping is out of date, and needs to be revised. For example, according to Michael Casey,

Currently, the U.S. defense establishment feels that it must maintain sufficient forces to fight and win two near-simultaneous major theater wars.... This ‘2 MRC’ [two major regional conflicts] force-sizing paradigm is an inappropriate model for the current U.S. strategy as it is badly linked to real world threats, is largely unaffordable, and short changes the future.<sup>168</sup>

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<sup>165</sup> Senator Joseph R. Biden (D-DE), “Against Withdrawal From Bosnia,” remarks on the Senate floor 23 May 2001. <http://www.thomas.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/D?r107:10:/temp/~r107Yo5u6P::>

<sup>166</sup> Cantello quoted in Gordon and Erlanger.

<sup>167</sup> Kitfield.

<sup>168</sup> Michael Casey, “Why The 2MTW Must Go,” in Steven Metz, ed. *Revising The Two MTW Force*

Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld has stated his desire to review the “2 MRC” paradigm.

It seems to me it's time for somebody in this department to be uncomfortable with the fact that we're parading around with the force sizing construct without the forces to fit, and therefore, the behavior pattern that is inappropriate to our circumstances.<sup>169</sup>

As a result of the numerous criticisms of the military's current structure, Secretary Rumsfeld has commissioned a study by Andrew Marshall, the Director of Net Assessment. While Marshall's findings are not yet final, they could result in a reconfigured military. Secretary Rumsfeld has long been a proponent of a more technologically oriented force, and is also a strong advocate of missile defense. Such priorities are expensive, however, and could come at the cost of force size. According to Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz, “at the end of the day, you do have to look at personnel. It's one of the most expensive parts of what we do.”<sup>170</sup> In order to make reductions, it is quite conceivable that the scale of U.S. commitments abroad could be reduced. This move could have a large impact on the U.S. military presence in the Balkans.

#### **D. POTENTIAL DIVISIONS WITHIN THE BUSH ADMINISTRATION**

Another factor that affects the U.S. debate, and ultimately U.S. policy, is the composition of the Bush administration. President Bush has admitted that he lacks experience in international affairs. To correct for this inexperience, he has assembled a group of appointees with a vast cumulative amount of experience, including Vice President Dick Cheney, Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, Secretary of State Colin Powell, and National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice

Secretary of State Colin Powell is a great asset for the Bush cabinet, but he has a reputation for opposition to U.S. involvement in military operations in the Balkans. Over the buildup of U.S. forces for the Gulf War, to which General Powell was opposed,

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*Shaping Paradigm* (Carlisle: Strategic Studies Institute, 2001), p. 105.

<sup>169</sup> “Donald Rumsfeld Holds Defense Department Briefing,” Federal Documents Clearing House Political Transcripts, 17 August 2001.

<sup>170</sup> Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz, quoted in Thom Shanker, “Rumsfeld Near Deadline For Reshaping Military,” *The New York Times*, 9 August 2001, p. A1.

the Secretary of Defense had to admonish Powell repeatedly to leave political matters to the civilians. ‘You’re not secretary of state,’ Cheney lectured him on one occasion. ‘You’re not the national security advisor anymore. And you’re not the secretary of defense. So stick to military matters.’ But Powell wouldn’t.<sup>171</sup>

In October 1992, General Powell, then Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, wrote a *New York Times* article about the Balkans, stating,

Decisive means and results are always to be preferred, even if they are not always possible. So you bet I get nervous when so-called experts suggest that all we need is a little surgical bombing or a limited attack.... The crisis in Bosnia is especially complex...one with deep ethnic and religious roots that go back a thousand years. The solution must ultimately be a political one. Deeper military involvement beyond humanitarian purposes requires great care and a full examination of possible outcomes.<sup>172</sup>

Now, of course, Powell *is* a civilian, and a tremendously popular one at that. When it was announced that he was to be Secretary of State, and that Donald Rumsfeld would be Secretary of Defense, many predicted conflict, and it has come to pass over the Balkans, among other issues.

A moderate on domestic and foreign policy issues, President Bush’s Secretary of State has emerged as a lonesome dove in an administration filled with hawks. Powell is eager to use his new diplomatic tool kit to resolve disputes through negotiations. But he has been at odds with a president and colleagues who prefer a harder line on foreign policy.<sup>173</sup>

Over the Balkans, this divide has manifested itself slowly. In the past, Powell was quite outspoken about his opposition to placing U.S. soldiers at risk for the security of the Bosnians, while Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld was a proponent of intervention in the Balkans as early as 1994,<sup>174</sup> and Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz has long “criticized reluctance to use U.S. troops abroad.”<sup>175</sup> When Powell was nominated as Secretary of State, he soothed worried allies, telling them that

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<sup>171</sup> Kaplan, “Colin Powell’s Out-Of-Date Foreign Policy.”

<sup>172</sup> Colin L. Powell, “Why Generals Get Nervous,” *The New York Times*, 8 October 1992, p. A35.

<sup>173</sup> Barbara Slavin, “Powell’s Position At Times Split From Bush’s,” *USA Today*, 26 March 2001, p. 15.

<sup>174</sup> Kaplan, “Containment: Cheney vs. Powell, Round Two,” p.19.

<sup>175</sup> Michael Rust, “Feature: Think Tanks Scrutinize Powell,” *United Press International*, 22 February 2001.

We're not cutting and running.... We're going to make a careful assessment of it [U.S. peacekeeping commitments] in consultation with our allies, then make some judgments.<sup>176</sup>

He reiterated these assurances at a NATO conference in Brussels in February 2001, saying that “we went in together, and we will go out together.”<sup>177</sup>

Secretary Rumsfeld was not prompt in supporting those assertions. At the Munich Conference on European Security Policy in early February 2001, he said that the United States would “not act unilaterally, or fail to consult with [its] allies.”<sup>178</sup> However, during a March 2001 press conference with the NATO Secretary General, Lord Robertson, Secretary Rumsfeld pointedly ignored a question asked about whether the United States would stay the course in the Balkans.<sup>179</sup> By May 2001, however, it seemed that the specter of U.S. withdrawal from ground force peacekeeping operations was gone, and that U.S. troops would be participating in such operations in the Balkans for years to come. Yet, that month, Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld advocated the withdrawal of U.S. troops from peacekeeping in Bosnia because “the military job” in Bosnia “was done three or four years ago.”<sup>180</sup> However, Secretary of State Colin Powell met with other NATO foreign ministers on 29 May 2001 in Budapest, and told them that “The President has made a decision on this.... We went into this together, and we'll come out together.”<sup>181</sup> In August 2001, Secretary Rumsfeld held a defense department briefing, at which he discussed Balkan peacekeeping.

When those forces went in [to Bosnia], they said they'd be out in a year. They're not out in a year. It's been five plus.... My concern is that we, the armed forces, the Pentagon...do not have the responsibility for developing the civil side. And that's hard work, it's difficult work, and it costs some

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<sup>176</sup> Colin Powell in “U.S. Troop Deployments To Be Reviewed: Powell,” *Agence France Presse*, 16 December 2000.

<sup>177</sup> Barry Schweid, “Powell Pledges Balkan Support,” *Dayton Daily News*, 28 February 2001, p. A8.

<sup>178</sup> Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, remarks delivered at the Munich Conference on European Security Policy, 3 February 2001. <http://www.defenselink.mil/speeches2001/s20010203-secdef.html>.

<sup>179</sup> Martin Kettle, “Powell Losing Policy Battle To Hardliners,” *Manchester Guardian Weekly*, 21 March 2001, p. 6.

<sup>180</sup> Rumsfeld quoted in “Relearning the Balkans,” *The Washington Post*, 31 May 2001, p. 24.

<sup>181</sup> Secretary of State Colin Powell remarks to the press 29 May 2001. <http://www.nato.int/docu/speech/2001/s010530g.htm>

money, and it takes some time.... Now, my attitude about it is that...if the United States armed forces can go into a situation...these are war-fighters, these aren't policemen and people who should be sitting there for 20 years doing something that somebody else could be doing. That's an enormous distraction for us.<sup>182</sup>

Such statements can only serve to worry America's NATO allies, while Secretary of State Powell has been trying ceaselessly to assuage their anxieties. Clearly, rifts have emerged in the Bush administration, and how the tremors settle out will affect the future of U.S. participation in peacekeeping in the Balkans.

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<sup>182</sup> "Donald Rumsfeld Holds Defense Department Briefing," Federal Documents Clearing House Political Transcripts, 17 August 2001.



## IV. THE NATO DEBATE

This chapter looks at the issues in a European and NATO context. It examines the evolution in NATO's identity over the last decade, and the centrality of the Balkans to that evolution. It also surveys the criticality of the United States to the NATO alliance, in terms of leadership, credibility and capabilities. It then considers the question of timing: are the current conditions in Europe and in the Balkans conducive to a U.S. withdrawal from participation in peacekeeping operations on the ground in Bosnia and Kosovo? After considering current trends in U.S. strategic policy, including a lessened emphasis on Europe (in comparison with Asia and the Middle East), greater investments in missile defense, and choices perceived in Europe as signs of unilateralism, the chapter closes by examining the potential effects of the 11 September 2001 terrorist attacks.

### A. EVOLUTION OF THE NATO ALLIANCE

The possibility of a U.S. withdrawal from participation in peacekeeping operations on the ground in the Balkans goes right to the heart of the NATO alliance, and is cause for great concern among alliance members due to NATO's evolving nature. When the North Atlantic Treaty was signed on 4 April 1949, the main premise behind the alliance was that of collective defense. Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty stated, "The Parties agree that an armed attack against one or more of them in Europe or North America shall be considered an attack against them all."<sup>183</sup> Article 6 defined the areas in which an attack would be deemed an attack on NATO:

on the territory of any of the Parties in Europe or North America, on the Algerian Departments of France, on the territory of Turkey or the islands under the jurisdiction of any of the Parties in the North Atlantic area north of the Tropic of Cancer.<sup>184</sup>

The obvious concern was an armed attack on European territory by Soviet forces. While the success of NATO's collective defense strategy in deterring Soviet aggression is unprovable, it is a fact that no such aggression took place and that the Cold War ended

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<sup>183</sup> North Atlantic Treaty, in *NATO Handbook: 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Edition* (Brussels: NATO Office of Information and Press, 1998), p. 396.

<sup>184</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 397.

without armed combat between the opposing alliances. In 1991, after the collapse of the Soviet Union, President George Bush said,

this alliance has been more successful than any of us dared to dream. It was designed to defend our freedom, but in fact it triumphed over totalitarianism.<sup>185</sup>

In February 2001, Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, a former ambassador to NATO, called it “the most successful military alliance in history.”<sup>186</sup> Yet this success led NATO to a crisis: what was to be NATO’s purpose now that the Cold War had been won?<sup>187</sup> Collective defense against a powerful Soviet adversary was no longer required, and the question arose whether NATO should not go the way of the defunct Warsaw Pact.

NATO’s answer to such questions came with the Rome Declaration in November 1991. Since NATO no longer had a specific enemy, it recast itself as “an agent of change, a source of stability and the indispensable guarantor of its members’ security.”<sup>188</sup> Most importantly, the declaration asserted, “our own security is inseparably linked to that of all other states in Europe.”<sup>189</sup> Thus, NATO, while still a collective defense organization, became a vehicle for collective security activities on an ad hoc and selective basis in the entire Euro-Atlantic region.

The first real post-Cold War test for the NATO allies in meeting collective security challenges came in the former Yugoslavia. According to Ian Thomas,

The experience of Yugoslavia made a poor advertisement for conceptions of a European security identity and of NATO as a force for stability. Moreover, it did little to enhance confidence that either European institutions or NATO could effectively respond to the new types of ethnic, religious, or nationalist conflicts that might be let loose in Europe by the ending of the Cold War.... When faced with a crisis at the gates of

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<sup>185</sup> President George Bush quoted in Ian Q. R. Thomas, *The Promise Of Alliance: NATO and the Political Imagination* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 1997), p. 151.

<sup>186</sup> Remarks delivered by Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld at the Munich Conference on European Security Policy, 3 February 2001. <http://www.defenselink.mil/speeches/2001/s20010203-secdef.html>.

<sup>187</sup> Thomas, p. 150.

<sup>188</sup> *The Rome Declaration on Peace and Cooperation*, para. 2, in Thomas, p. 153.

<sup>189</sup> *The Rome Declaration on Peace and Cooperation*, para. 9, in Thomas, p. 153.

Western Europe, NATO's political leaders were unwilling to act. This unwillingness, in turn, was perceived as a failure of NATO.<sup>190</sup>

As the conflict in Bosnia wore on, NATO had "only limited roles, such as embargo and no-fly-zone enforcement and the delivery of humanitarian supplies, while the main action on the ground was carried out by UNPROFOR."<sup>191</sup> UNPROFOR's failure to bring a halt to atrocities in the former Yugoslavia reflected poorly on NATO as well, and it was not until after the Sarajevo marketplace bombing in February 1994 that NATO began to regain credibility.

When the Bosnian Serbs again defied the no-fly-zone on February 28, 1994, NATO shot down four Bosnian Serb aircraft. This was significant in NATO's history as the Alliance's first use of deadly force; with that act, in the words of one analyst, 'NATO redeemed its credibility'—at least temporarily.<sup>192</sup>

This credibility was then undermined, however, in November 1994, when

NATO launched limited air strikes against an airfield in Croatia from which Croatian Serbs were flying missions against Bihac, as well as against a number of Serb surface-to-air missile sites in Bosnia. Subsequent NATO and UN threats of further escalation did not deter the Bosnian Serb forces. To the contrary, the Serbs responded with a series of countermeasures, including blockading 200 UN peacekeepers stationed at nine weapons collection sites around Sarajevo, detaining 50 Canadian troops, and stopping the movement of all other UN military observers throughout Bosnia.<sup>193</sup>

In May 1995, renewed Serb shelling of UN safe havens went unpunished, and NATO forces responded only after the 22 May 1995 Serb seizure of artillery in the heavy weapons exclusion zone around Sarajevo.<sup>194</sup> Bosnian Serbs responded to the NATO attacks with additional shelling and also took UN peacekeepers hostage, forcing NATO to stop. In July 1995, Bosnian Serbs took the city of Srebrenica, a UN safe haven, and

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<sup>190</sup> Thomas, p. 161.

<sup>191</sup> David Yost, *NATO Transformed: The Alliance's New Roles in International Security* (Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press, 1998), p. 194.

<sup>192</sup> Yost, p. 195.

<sup>193</sup> Ivo Daalder, *Getting To Dayton: The Making of America's Bosnia Policy* (Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution Press, 2000), p. 32.

<sup>194</sup> Ibid.

slaughtered thousands of Bosniaks, “making a mockery of the safe havens concept and seriously undermining NATO’s credibility.”<sup>195</sup>

To regain control of the situation, NATO undertook a sustained air campaign in August 1995 that, combined with a Croatian ground offensive and a vigorous U.S. diplomatic initiative, led to the Dayton Accords.<sup>196</sup> After three years (1992-1995) of shameful war in Europe (the UNPROFOR phase of the conflict), the prospect of peace in Bosnia finally lent NATO’s efforts some credibility. To cement its role as a guarantor of European peace, NATO led both the UNSC-authorized Implementation Force (IFOR) and the subsequent Stabilization Force (SFOR) in Bosnia.

When ethnic violence erupted again in Kosovo in 1998, NATO’s role as the keeper of the peace in Europe was once again called into question. Compared with the response of NATO governments to violence in Bosnia, NATO acted with alacrity, commencing bombing in March 1999. Such deliberate and forceful action was designed to erase all doubts about NATO’s determination to prevail. The Allies used force without the authorization of the UN Security Council. Yet, this action occurred only after Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic ignored repeated warnings and deadlines set by leaders of NATO governments. According to Michael O’Hanlon and Ivo Daalder, NATO’s action against Serbia did not erase doubts about NATO, but actually helped them to grow.

NATO stumbled into war, unready either for countering Serbia’s massive campaign to forcefully expel much of the ethnic Albanian population from Kosovo or to do militarily what it would take to achieve its stated objectives.... Operation Allied Force was in its early weeks a textbook case of how *not* to wage war.<sup>197</sup>

NATO began a bombing campaign after U.S. President Bill Clinton had already dismissed the possibility of sending in troops. With no threat of an intervention with ground troops, the Serbs evidently felt that they could simply outlast NATO bombs, and during the initial weeks of bombing they accelerated their “ethnic cleansing” in

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<sup>195</sup> Ibid., p. 163.

<sup>196</sup> Ibid., p. 163

<sup>197</sup> Ivo Daalder and Michael O’Hanlon, *Winning Ugly: NATO’s War to Save Kosovo* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 2000), p. 18.

Kosovo.<sup>198</sup> When the bombing campaign did not result in the quick victory NATO had originally expected, the use of ground forces slowly became a possibility. In mid-May 1999, President Clinton decided that “the political costs of failure were greater than the political costs of casualties,”<sup>199</sup> and began to make a case for ground force operations while NATO stepped up the pace and scope of its air strikes. Yugoslav President Milosevic was told about “NATO’s likely invasion plans by Viktor Chernomyrdin during the latter’s first visit to Belgrade on May 27.”<sup>200</sup> On 3 June 1999, the Serb parliament approved a military technical agreement for the withdrawal of Serb military and police forces from Kosovo and the deployment of an international force into Kosovo.<sup>201</sup> Thus, NATO has led the UNSC-authorized Kosovo Force (KFOR), another major task in support of collective security.

On 23-24 April 1999, NATO heads of state and government held a summit meeting in Washington, D.C. and approved an updated NATO strategic concept. While reaffirming NATO’s “essential and enduring purpose” of safeguarding “the freedom and security of all its members,” the new strategic concept took the initiative of the 1991 Rome Declaration to a new level.<sup>202</sup> In order to “enhance the security and stability of the Euro-Atlantic area,” NATO also adopted the “fundamental security task” of Crisis Management:

To stand ready, case-by-case and by consensus, in conformity with Article 7 of the Washington Treaty, to contribute to effective conflict prevention and to engage actively in crisis management, including crisis response operations.<sup>203</sup>

With its new “fundamental security tasks,” including “partnership” with former adversaries and other non-NATO countries in the Euro-Atlantic region, enshrined in official NATO documents, the Alliance has defined its new purposes in the post-Cold

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<sup>198</sup> Ibid., p. 197.

<sup>199</sup> Ibid., p. 156.

<sup>200</sup> Ibid., p. 160.

<sup>201</sup> Ibid., p. 174.

<sup>202</sup> “The Alliance’s Strategic Concept,” NATO Press Release, 24 April 1999, par. 6.  
<http://www.nato.int/docu/pr/1999/p99-065e.htm>

<sup>203</sup> Ibid, par. 10.

War world, purposes whose development came about largely as a result of events in the Balkans.

It should come as no surprise, then, that some Europeans have responded to the Rice Proposal with horror. After a decade of reshaping NATO's purposes and missions, and finally coming to some sort of consensus, the prospect of a U.S. withdrawal of ground forces from the very region that helped redefine NATO has seemed a betrayal to some Europeans. Such an act was seen as possibly having grave consequences for NATO's future. British journalist Hugo Young echoed European sentiment over the proposal when he said, "I think it would split NATO; indeed, I think it would probably end NATO as NATO is now seen."<sup>204</sup>

## **B. RISK SHARING**

NATO's acceptance of collective security responsibilities on a selective basis during the 1990's helps in part to explain the European response to the Rice Proposal, but there is much more to it, most notably the concept of risk sharing. The Rice Proposal's "division of labor" would have the European (and Canadian) troops doing all of the work on the ground in the Balkans while U.S. forces would provide intelligence and logistics support.<sup>205</sup> It is true that the United States is the country most capable of supplying such support, but it is on the ground that peace is made, and it is there also that troops are at risk. According to Michael Gordon, "Many European allies have been insistent that the United States share the risks of Balkan operations."<sup>206</sup>

Risk sharing has been a guiding principle of NATO since its inception, when the United States was so committed to defending its European allies from Soviet aggression that it was willing to station hundreds of thousands of troops on European soil, to fight and die with the European allies if necessary. Despite the absence of a Soviet enemy, risk sharing remains an important aspect of alliance cohesion. According to a report in October 2000,

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<sup>204</sup> Hugo Young quoted in "All Things Considered: America's European Allies Express Dismay At George W. Bush's Campaign Talk About Withdrawing From The Balkans," National Public Radio, 25 October 2000.

<sup>205</sup> Michael R. Gordon, "Bush Would Stop U.S. Peacekeeping In Balkan Fights," *The New York Times*, 21 October 2000, p. A1.

<sup>206</sup> Ibid.

Lord Robertson, the NATO Secretary-General, has regularly told visiting American congressmen that the Bush proposal could undermine the whole idea of “risk sharing, which is precisely the glue that holds the alliance together.”<sup>207</sup>

The critical role that risk sharing plays in the NATO alliance was demonstrated during the last two years of the war in Bosnia, when NATO cohesion was at serious risk. According to Robert Hunter, who was the U.S. Ambassador to NATO from 1993 to 1998,

Europeans have always wondered whether, when the time came, America would truly be ‘over here’ in terms of accepting risks for Europe’s security. Even in the post-Cold War era, the principle of sharing risks is critical to holding the alliance together. It was over this precise issue that NATO faced its worst-ever internal crisis when, from 1993 to 1995, the U.S. sought allied agreement to use NATO air power in Bosnia.... [I]n early 1995, Washington finally authorized me to announce to the allies that, if UNPROFOR had to be withdrawn under hostile fire, U.S. troops would help get them out safely. Within minutes, allied psychology changed; suddenly, the U.S. seemed willing to share risks, even though they were only hypothetical. In the ensuing period, the European allies agreed to NATO’s use of air power, the war ended, the Dayton Accords were concluded and the NATO-led Implementation Force, or IFOR, went to Bosnia.<sup>208</sup>

According to Mats Berdal, a Norwegian analyst at the International Institute for Strategic Studies in London, “The lesson we all drew from Bosnia is that Europeans being on the ground and Americans not is a disastrous combination.”<sup>209</sup> Risk sharing is a vital part of NATO cohesion; and if the United States is unwilling to place its troops at risk, the alliance could suffer.

### **C. CRITICALITY OF THE UNITED STATES TO NATO**

NATO’s experience in Bosnia also taught the European allies that American strength and leadership are truly vital to NATO’s operations. The United States has always been the leading nation in NATO, and if it is unwilling to lead on an issue, NATO

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<sup>207</sup> Lord Robertson quoted in Steven Erlanger, “Europeans Say Bush’s Pledge To Pull Out Of Balkans Could Split NATO,” *The New York Times*, 25 October 2000.

<sup>208</sup> Robert E. Hunter, “NATO Faces a New Threat: President Bush,” *The Los Angeles Times*, 26 October 2000.

<sup>209</sup> Mats Berdal quoted in James Traub, “The Bush Years: W’s World,” *The New York Times*, 14 January 2001, p. 28.

tends to founder. The course of events in Bosnia in 1992-1995 certainly proved this point, as U.S.-European disagreements on policy in the Balkans probably contributed to the failure of the UNPROFOR intervention and the prolongation of the conflict. When President Clinton's Secretary of State, Warren Christopher, went to Europe in May 1993 to propose "lift and strike," he said that he was in a "listening mode;" he evidently was not prepared to convince the European allies to act decisively.<sup>210</sup> The Europeans resisted the U.S.-proposed air strikes because they had troops on the ground while the United States did not. It is quite possible, however, that had President Clinton been more willing to bring diplomatic pressure to bear, the NATO allies might have been compelled to act. However, President Clinton was not prepared to exert such pressure, and the war dragged on until mid-1995.

The importance of American leadership in NATO was proved again in Kosovo. In March 1999, President Clinton, having learned a lesson from Bosnia, and with NATO and United States credibility on the line, supported the initiation of air operations against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia from 15,000 feet. The air campaign lasted much longer than estimated. Despite skeptics, the United States willingness to see it through resulted in allied victory. According to Rob de Wijk,

Strong American leadership has always been deemed crucial for collective defense and as a pacifier to prevent European powers from pursuing risky policies.... The Kosovo crisis has demonstrated that warfare requires a *lead nation* which dominates both political and military decision-making during the operation. Fighting a war the democratic way, with nineteen member states involved in the decision-making process, undermines the effectiveness of the operation. It leaves the initiative to the adversary, thus prolonging the war.... [B]oth NATO's internal pacifying function and heavy crisis response operations require leadership. At present there is no alternative to US leadership.<sup>211</sup>

U.S. leadership has been vital to NATO's operations in the Balkans, but NATO's European members will be unlikely to accept that leadership if the United States is unwilling to keep troops on the ground. According to Lord Roper, a British defense

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<sup>210</sup> Yost, p. 196.

<sup>211</sup> Rob de Wijk, "What Is NATO?" in Rob de Wijk, Bram Boxhoorn, and Niklaas Hoekstra, eds. *NATO After Kosovo* (Breda: Tilburg University Press, 2000), p. 3.



analyst and Liberal Democratic peer, “You can’t not be present and want to call all the shots. Then we really are back to Bosnia in 1992.”<sup>212</sup>

U.S. leadership and commitment are particularly vital because, as the last decade has shown, the other NATO countries simply do not have sufficient assets to carry out some military tasks.

One problem admittedly is that Europeans talk loudly and carry a tiny little stick. For instance, on October 9 [2000], the Associated Press reported that the Dutch government had bravely volunteered 1,000 peacekeeping troops to the war-torn border regions between Eritrea and Ethiopia. This noble gesture, however, was predicated on a commitment from President Clinton that the United States would promise to pull out the troops should fighting erupt; the Dutch have no means of doing it themselves.<sup>213</sup>

The Secretary-General of NATO has acknowledged that European governments have limited military capabilities: “Kosovo has made it very clear to everyone that Europe might be an economic giant, and it might have real political influence—but when it comes to doing the heavy lifting of issues of peace and security, Europe is still not pulling its weight.”<sup>214</sup> This is true in the more recent Operation Essential Harvest, NATO’s operation to disarm Albanian guerrillas in Macedonia. According to *The Economist*,

Faced with the prospect of going it mostly alone in Macedonia, the Europeans know how much they still need the Americans. It is not the American troops that Europeans want.... Only one American is serving in Macedonia’s NATO force—a press officer. But American logistical support supplied via a NATO base in Macedonia, notably in transport and intelligence-gathering, is still crucial.<sup>215</sup>

As a result of the events of the last decade in the Balkans, the participation of U.S. ground forces is vital to the success of NATO operations in the Balkans.

U.S. troops now serving in Bosnia and Kosovo represent a small fraction

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<sup>212</sup> Lord Roper quoted in Erlanger.

<sup>213</sup> Helle Bering, “Patrolling The Peace,” *The Washington Times*, 25 October 2000.

<sup>214</sup> Comments by NATO Secretary-General Lord Robertson on 30 October 2000, in “Bush Hint To Pull Troops From Balkans Misinterpreted: Robertson,” Agence France Presse, 31 October 2000.

<sup>215</sup> “Wake Up, Europe!” *The Economist*, 15 September 2001, p. 45.

of the international peacekeeping force, but they have a disproportionate impact in deterring extremists in those countries. Moreover, the United States is the only country that enjoys real credibility and leverage with the Albanians and their leaders.<sup>216</sup>

The conduct of peacekeepers from France, Russia, and Ukraine has resulted in their gaining a reputation in the Balkans as Serb sympathizers.<sup>217</sup>

The political and military interventions in the Balkans by European powers in 1991-1995 failed to contain the violence. When the Americans led decisive air operations in 1995 and in 1999, however, “ethnic cleansing” of Bosniaks and Kosovar Albanians stopped, and this correlation has given the U.S. forces extra legitimacy and importance. In the absence of a committed U.S. ground force presence, it is reasonable to expect that confidence in the ability of SFOR and KFOR to maintain order would seriously erode. According to Richard Holbrooke, now of the Council on Foreign Relations, if the United States withdraws its ground forces, “The rapists, racists, demagogues and criminal elements in the Balkans will come back out of the woodwork.”<sup>218</sup>

Another important U.S. leadership role has to do with Russia’s involvement in the Balkans. NATO was an alliance arrayed against the Soviet Union—a Russian-dominated entity—for over forty years. As a matter of traditional enmity toward NATO and national pride (and because NATO enlargement was perceived as threatening Russia’s sphere of influence), Russia has refused to place its forces in Bosnia and Kosovo under the NATO chain of command. Michael Gordon writes,

The Russians have participated in peacekeeping in both Bosnia and Kosovo under the aegis of the Americans, in order not to be taking orders directly from a NATO general. If the Americans leave, who manages the Russians?<sup>219</sup>

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<sup>216</sup> “Relearning The Balkans,” *The Washington Post*, 31 May 2001, p. 24.

<sup>217</sup> David Rieff, *Slaughterhouse: Bosnia and the Failure of the West* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1995), pp. 149, 151.

<sup>218</sup> Richard Holbrooke quoted in Ann Roosevelt, “Amid Tensions, Administration Heads For Europe,” *Defense Week*, 29 May 2001, p. 1.

<sup>219</sup> Erlanger.

This question is especially important in the wake of NATO's air operation in the Kosovo conflict, which the Russians vehemently opposed. NATO conducted its operation against Serbia without the authorization of the UN Security Council. Russia viewed this act as insulting, as it bypassed Russia's potential veto as a permanent Security Council member, and also as threatening, as NATO's Kosovo intervention could be viewed as a blueprint for possible action in Russia over the Chechnya conflict.<sup>220</sup> Russia subsequently suspended almost all ties to NATO (they were not restored until early 2000) and adopted a new Concept of National Security that demonizes NATO.<sup>221</sup>

Without U.S. participation in ground force peacekeeping operations, there might well be an increased risk that NATO and Russia would be at odds with each other. In the absence of a powerful U.S. presence, a new balance for Russian influence in the region would have to be found. Januzc Bugajski submits that, if the Americans withdraw their ground forces,

the biggest beneficiary will be Moscow.... Under President Vladimir Putin, the Kremlin is seeking to reassert its influence in the region, not by military muscle but through its oligarchs and criminal business interests and its attempts to forge a common front against the alleged Islamic, Albanian, and American threats.<sup>222</sup>

#### **D. TIMING**

A vital aspect of European misgivings over a possible U.S. withdrawal of ground forces from Balkan peacekeeping operations concerns the question of timing. The NATO allies are in agreement that their peacekeepers will eventually withdraw from the Balkans, but many feel that now is not the time. To begin with, the former president of Yugoslavia, Slobodan Milosevic, was removed from power in October 2000, and in June 2001 he was delivered to the International War Crimes Tribunal in The Hague. Vojislav Kostunica, the democratically elected Yugoslav President, is working with the parliament to rebuild his country. In the face of the monumental tasks confronting the peoples of the former Yugoslavia, and with continuing ethnic strife, it is unlikely that now would be an

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<sup>220</sup> Daalder and O'Hanlon, p. 197.

<sup>221</sup> Ibid., p. 197.

<sup>222</sup> Januzc Bugajski, "Macedonia On The Brink," *The Washington Times*, 11 May 2001, p. 19.

auspicious time to pull out the ground forces that are the best-equipped and the most conducive to stability. In Bosnia,

Pro-western governments exist for the first time at the state level and in the Muslim-Croat entity. But recent events attest to peace's fragility and the need for a credible SFOR presence. Last month [April 2001] international officials were beaten and taken hostage while auditing a bank with links to Croatian extremists. A few weeks ago, ceremonies to mark the rebuilding of mosques destroyed in the war were broken up by Serb nationalists. And as more refugees return home, violent incidents increase, and local police are often too weak or corrupt to help.<sup>223</sup>

According to a publication by the International Crisis Group,

Contrary to assertions by U.S. Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, the job of the military is far from 'done'.... Abandoning the Dayton agenda now would mean consigning the country to a state of simmering unrest requiring near-permanent foreign military occupation or, at worst, to a renewal of hostilities following its desertion by the international community.<sup>224</sup>

There are still many ethnic enclaves throughout Bosnia that wield local control, and their influence has made the return of refugees and the reconstruction of civil order quite problematic.<sup>225</sup> Without the credible presence of SFOR troops, even limited success in pursuing the Dayton agenda would be unlikely. The SFOR chain of command concurs with this judgment.. The official SFOR website contains the following statement:

For lasting peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina, full implementation of the military aspects of the Dayton Agreement is crucial. By continuing the implementation of the military aspects of the Dayton Agreement, NATO is helping to ensure a secure environment conducive to civil order and political reconstruction.<sup>226</sup>

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<sup>223</sup> Gareth Evans, "Sorry, The Boys Should Darn Well Stay In Bosnia," *International Herald Tribune*, 25 May 2001.

<sup>224</sup> "No Early Exit: NATO's Continuing Challenge In The Balkans," International Crisis Group Balkans Report No. 110, 22 May 2001, pp. ii-iii. The International Crisis Group is a private, multinational organization based in Brussels and sponsored by fifteen countries, as well as by charitable foundations, companies and individual donors. The ICG performs field research and seeks to strengthen the capacity of the "international community" to anticipate, understand and act to prevent and contain conflict.

<sup>225</sup> Ibid., p. 3.

<sup>226</sup> Statement on SFOR website. <http://www.nato.int/sfor/docu/d9811116a.htm>

A similar condition exists in Kosovo. The question of Kosovar Albanian autonomy was studiously ignored by the 1995 Dayton Accords, and it remained unresolved by the 1999 military technical agreement that brought the NATO campaign to an end. But,

as long as Slobo [Slobodan Milosevic] was in power in Belgrade, independence for Kosovo seemed likely and even imminent. But once he was replaced by a constitutional, pro-West regime, everything changed. Now the West's principal goal in the region is to support the fragile democracy in Yugoslavia. Kosovo's independence might have to wait.<sup>227</sup>

As a result, ethnic Albanian nationalists have continued destabilizing guerrilla activities, helped by the fact that KFOR initially relied on ethnic Albanian nationalists to serve as security forces in Kosovo.

Albanian nationalism has subsequently bloomed into a destabilizing force.

NATO has agreed; Western leaders fear that unchecked, [ethnic] Albanian radicals in Kosovo and the Macedonian and Serb border areas will carve their own Greater Albania out of another ethnic group's hide. The belligerence could destabilize the region and put NATO's peacekeepers in Kosovo and Macedonia, including 5,600 Americans, in harm's way.<sup>228</sup>

As a result of ethnic Albanian unrest in Macedonia, NATO actually requested more troops for Kosovo, a request that directly contradicted the Rice Proposal. On 21 March 2001, "NATO's top political body, the North Atlantic Council, called...for more peacekeeping troops for Kosovo. But Rumsfeld said no additional American peacekeepers would be sent."<sup>229</sup> Despite a plea from Lord Robertson, allied governments, taking their cue from the United States, did not send any significant reinforcements to Kosovo.<sup>230</sup>

The fighting in Macedonia intensified during the spring and summer of 2001. Eventually, under heavy pressure from NATO governments, the two main ethnic groups

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<sup>227</sup> Fareed Zakaria, "Breathing Room In The Balkans," *Newsweek*, 22 March 2001, p. 14.

<sup>228</sup> "Our View: Bush Policy Wavers As Balkan Dangers Mount," *USA Today*, 22 March 2001, p. 14.

<sup>229</sup> Jonathan S. Landay, "U.S. Hesitance To Send Troops To Balkans Draws Critics," *Ft Worth Star-Telegram*, 22 March 2001, p. 1.

<sup>230</sup> Jane Perlez, "NATO Leader Asks For More Kosovo Troops," *The New York Times*, 21 March 2001.

in Macedonia (called Slavs and Albanians by most outside observers) signed a cease-fire agreement. On 27 August 2001, NATO forces began Operation *Essential Harvest*. The NATO operation utilized 4,500 troops to gather weapons from the ethnic Albanian National Liberation Army (NLA) and to oversee the cease-fire.<sup>231</sup> In accordance with the Rice Proposal, U.S. forces were utilized in the operation only in logistics and intelligence capacities, not on the ground.<sup>232</sup> This is an important development in the implementation of some aspects of the Rice Proposal, and indicates some acceptance of the Bush administration's desire to minimize the number of U.S. ground troops abroad in peacekeeping operations; but it does not mean that European governments have acceded to all of the proposal's tenets. Indeed, the fact that such an operation was necessary points to the extreme delicacy of the ethnic balance in the Balkans, and reinforces the European argument for a continued U.S. ground force presence in Bosnia and Kosovo.

It also vindicates certain assessments made by the United States and its NATO allies in the early 1990's. Ethnic Albanian nationalism was the key to the wider Balkan war scenario that made the Balkans such a threat to European stability in 1991. The reason why President George Bush issued his "Christmas warning" in December 1992—and why President Bill Clinton reiterated it in 1993—was that

the United States and its European allies recognized that Kosovo was a powder keg in the middle of a highly volatile region. With Albanians living in at least four countries (Albania, Greece, Macedonia, and Yugoslavia), anything that stoked Albanian nationalism could be highly destabilizing.<sup>233</sup>

Most worrisome was the possibility that Greece and Turkey could end up embroiled in the conflict. Both countries are members of NATO, but they are also long-time rivals; and an expansion of Albanian nationalist violence could result in a rift within NATO.<sup>234</sup> Such a possibility is even more likely now than in the early 1990's, contributing to the European view that the time is not ripe for a U.S. withdrawal of ground forces.

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<sup>231</sup> Peter Finn, "NATO Begins To Collect Weapons In Macedonia," *The Washington Post*, 28 August 2001, p. 1.

<sup>232</sup> Ibid.

<sup>233</sup> Daalder and O'Hanlon, p. 9.

<sup>234</sup> Nicholas Gage, "Before The Next Balkan Bloodbath," *The Washington Post*, 22 May 2001, p. 21.

## E. STRATEGIC SHIFTS

European concerns over a possible withdrawal of American troops have been exacerbated by the emphasis that the Bush administration and the Defense Department in particular have placed on Asia. Given Russia's current political and economic weakness, China has been viewed by the Bush administration as a potential "strategic competitor" of the United States. "The Bush administration has already expressed its intention to focus U.S. military might more sharply on national security threats emanating from Asia."<sup>235</sup> On 30 August 2001, Army Secretary Thomas E. White hinted that U.S. troops might be "redeployed from Europe to Asia to serve as a hedge against potential conflicts there."<sup>236</sup> For Europeans concerned with the reliability of U.S. commitments to Europe, such hints spell trouble. According to a British journalist,

If defense spending is about fighting wars, then the wars the United States expects to wage, or hopes to deter, will be Pacific-specific. Europe in so far as it furrows foreheads, will have to take care of itself.... Put simply, the Pentagon is reprioritizing the threat list.... China, in Rumsfeld's own words, is where the potential threat lies.<sup>237</sup>

Another aspect of the European debate concerns United States plans for a ballistic missile defense (BMD) system and a growing sense of U.S. unilateralism. In January 1999 the Clinton administration initiated development of what it called a National Missile Defense (NMD) system—a modest capability oriented toward the small numbers of missiles that rogue states were projected to acquire, in contrast to the Reagan administration's Strategic Defense Initiative in 1983-1989. NMD's purpose would be to protect the United States from ballistic missiles launched by "rogue" countries such as Iraq or North Korea. After the NMD prototype failed in a test in July 2000, President Clinton in September 2000 deferred decisions on its future to the next president, who turned out to be George W. Bush, a strong proponent of strategic missile defenses. Bush's Secretary of Defense, Donald Rumsfeld, has been perhaps an even stronger proponent, and new plans to develop missile defense systems were soon underway.

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<sup>235</sup> Paul Richter, "Army Shift To Asia May Include Troops," *The Los Angeles Times*, 31 August 2001, p. 1.

<sup>236</sup> Ibid.

<sup>237</sup> Peter Preston, "Moscow Doesn't Matter Anymore. And Neither Do We," *Guardian*, 26 March 2001.

U.S. strategic missile defenses have been a subject of great concern for Europeans. “A missile shield, they (notably the French) say, would unite nations such as China, North Korea, and Russia to amass more nukes and thereby threaten the stability of Europe.”<sup>238</sup> Europeans also fear closer ties between China and Russia. To some extent this fear has become a reality in the wake of the new Russia-China strategic partnership.<sup>239</sup>

Missile defense is at the very core of Europeans’ uneasiness about the United States. They fear that a system designed to protect the United States from missiles will destroy the very underpinnings of the NATO alliance, the idea of a shared defense against a common threat, by creating the old dream of fortress America.<sup>240</sup>

Indeed, such plans would seem to be right in line with the Rice Proposal.

European fears in this regard seem to have been reinforced by the Bush administration’s handling of several international policy issues.<sup>241</sup> President Bush refused to back the Kyoto agreement on climate control (a protocol which the U.S. Senate had already rejected by a vote of 95-0) despite broad European support, and negotiated an arms deal with Taiwan despite broad disapproval. He also refused to support a draft agreement on verification of the 1972 Biological Weapons Convention, saying that it would not enhance U.S. national security or provide for effective verification of BWC violations. Finally, President Bush has repeatedly expressed his willingness to develop a missile defense system regardless of Russia’s stance on renegotiating or replacing the Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty.

The general European feeling in March 2001 was that “The conflict over missile defense, but also over climate control and questions of world trade, has to be seen in the context of a U.S. unilateralism which the Bush-Cheney administration appears to pursue as a new doctrine.”<sup>242</sup> Such sentiments have not been limited to European governments.

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<sup>238</sup> “Some Alliance,” *Richmond Times Dispatch*, 28 October 2000.

<sup>239</sup> “What’s The Real Point?” *The Economist*, 21 July 2001, p. 9.

<sup>240</sup> James Mann, “Not Your Father’s Foreign Policy,” *The American Prospect*, 9 April 2001, p. 28.

<sup>241</sup> Roosevelt.

<sup>242</sup> Rolf Paasch, “The American Friend,” *Frankfurter Rundschau*, 29 March 2001, as translated in “Portrait Of Bush Foreign Policy: Unilateralist and Adversarial,” Federation of American Scientists, 3 April 2001. <http://www.fas.org/news/usa/2001/us-0104103.htm>



An *International Herald Tribune* survey conducted in August 2001 found that over 70% of the people in Britain, France, Germany and Italy felt that the President Bush “makes decisions based entirely on U.S. interests.”<sup>243</sup> In May 2001, when the United States was voted out of the United Nations Human Rights Commission,

the message was clear. The embarrassing snub to the United States could be attributed to a seeming absence of ‘dialogue and respect’ in the Bush administration’s approach to the outside world.<sup>244</sup>

Again, such behavior as a context to the Rice Proposal tends to reinforce European fears of a U.S. withdrawal of ground forces from peacekeeping in the Balkans.

Yet, in spite of seeming U.S. unilateralism and possible complications as a result of U.S. missile defense plans, dialogue is increasing on the topic, in part because the Bush administration abandoned the Clinton administration term “National Missile Defense” soon after taking office, and instead refers to it as “missile defense.” “Kim Holmes, a foreign policy analyst at the Heritage Foundation, said he found...that opposition from officials and analysts in Europe weakened appreciably when the ‘national’ was dropped from NMD discussions.”<sup>245</sup> When the United States began to include its European allies in its vision of a missile defense (MD) concept, opposition from European governments began to lessen. Since both Secretary of State Colin Powell and Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld have stated that the United States would not unilaterally withdraw from the Balkans,

cracks in the once-solid skepticism of NATO’s European allies have been widening noticeably.... Javier Solana, the former NATO Secretary-General, who now sets security policy for the European Union, told reporters in Washington that the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty ... ‘is not the Bible.’... Lord George Robertson, Mr. Solana’s successor as head of NATO, told a news conference in Brussels yesterday [5 February 2001] that ‘there has to be an acceptance that the decision on missile defense was

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<sup>243</sup> Adam Clyman, “Survey Finds European People Critical Of Bush Policies,” *The New York Times*, 16 August 2001, p. A6.

<sup>244</sup> Roger Cohen, “To European Eyes, It’s America The Ugly,” *The New York Times*, 7 May 2001, p. A1.

<sup>245</sup> David R. Sands, “Europe Warms To Missile Defense,” *The Washington Times*, 6 February 2001, p. 1.

made in the U.S. presidential election.’<sup>246</sup>

This acceptance has grown, as the Bush administration has worked with Russia to formulate a new regime for MD, with some success. European support for U.S. missile defense plans has grown, in part due to the Bush administration’s efforts at rallying support, but also as a result of the apparent abandonment of the Rice Proposal.

#### **F. POSSIBLE CONSEQUENCES OF THE TERRORIST ATTACKS ON 11 SEPTEMBER 2001**

Recent events have influenced NATO European perceptions of international security requirements, with potential implications for the Rice Proposal. The 11 September 2001 terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon were acts of war against the United States. Osama bin Laden’s Al Queda terrorist network stands accused of the worst terrorist attack in history, an attack that, according to initial estimates, cost almost 5,000 innocent lives. Bin Laden is reputed to have been in Afghanistan for years, running terrorist networks that purportedly planned the February 1993 World Trade Center bombing, the June 1996 attack on a U.S. military complex in Saudi Arabia, the August 1998 attacks on U.S. embassies in Kenya and Tanzania, and the October 2000 attack on the USS Cole in Yemen.<sup>247</sup> The 11 September 2001 attacks were the most extensive such assaults on U.S. soil, however, and the response by the United States has been vigorous.

Soon after the attack, the U.S. government began “deploying thousands of special operations forces and dozens of helicopters into the region around Afghanistan.”<sup>248</sup> As of 3 October 2001, there were over 30,000 U.S. troops in the region, including a Marine Amphibious Ready Group, three Naval Carrier Battle Groups, infantrymen from the Army’s 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain Division and massive air power.<sup>249</sup> As of 10 October 2001, over twenty-seven thousand Reserves and National Guardsmen had been called to active

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<sup>246</sup> Ibid.

<sup>247</sup> “Who Did It?” *The Economist*, 15 September 2001, p. 18.

<sup>248</sup> Michael Evans, “US Troops And Helicopters Set For Ground War,” *London Times*, 11 October 2001.

<sup>249</sup> Vernon Loeb and Thomas E. Ricks, “U.S. Sends Troops To Ex-Soviet Republics,” *The Washington Post*, 3 October 2001, p. 21.

duty,<sup>250</sup> as part of an expected mobilization of up to fifty thousand.<sup>251</sup> With such troop movements, it would not be surprising to see U.S. troops redeployed from the Balkans.

In October 2001, an unnamed Pentagon official was quoted as saying that “troops for any operation in Afghanistan would certainly be pulled from the 10,000-strong US peacekeeping missions in Bosnia and Kosovo.”<sup>252</sup> Troops in the Balkans are closer to the region, and have already received all the training and certification necessary for deployment to a battle zone. For these reasons, aside from geographical proximity, they could be sent to Afghanistan more quickly than some stateside troops.<sup>253</sup> Additionally, U.S. troops in the Balkans have what could prove to be valuable peacekeeping experience. It is hoped that the war against terrorism will result in the downfall of the Taliban, the Islamic fundamentalist group which currently controls Afghanistan. If this occurs, the United States will likely have an interest in helping Afghanistan to rebuild. The troops in the Balkans, who have been helping parts of the former Yugoslavia rebuild, could be invaluable assets in such an undertaking. U.S. troops in the Balkans, given their location and expertise, are remarkably well suited to serve in Afghanistan.

NATO’s response to the terrorist attacks could facilitate decisions by the United States to move U.S. peacekeepers from the Balkans to Afghanistan. The day after the attacks, NATO invoked the collective defense pledge in Article 5 of the Washington Treaty for the first time in history, and the North Atlantic Council (NAC) confirmed on 2 October 2001 that the attacks were from a source outside the alliance, and therefore covered by Article 5.<sup>254</sup> As a result, the NAC authorized the use of NATO assets in the retaliation against Osama bin Laden, including 5 AWACS aircraft and the nine ships of the Standing Naval Forces, Mediterranean (STANAVFORMED).<sup>255</sup> American and

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<sup>250</sup> “Reserve, National Guard Units Called Up,” US DOD News Release, 10 October 2001. [http://www.defenselink.mil/news/oct2001/b10102001\\_bt502-01.html](http://www.defenselink.mil/news/oct2001/b10102001_bt502-01.html)

<sup>251</sup> John H. Cushman, Jr., “More Reserves Called Up,” *The New York Times*, 23 September 2001.

<sup>252</sup> Ben Rooney, “NATO Fears US Will Abandon Balkans,” *London Daily Telegraph*, 11 October 2001.

<sup>253</sup> Thomas E. Ricks, “Next Phase to Include More Troops,” *The Washington Post*, 9 October 2001, p. 1.

<sup>254</sup> “Invocation of Article 5 Confirmed,” NATO Update, 2 October 2001. <http://www.nato.int/docu/update/2001/1001/e1002a.htm>

<sup>255</sup> SACEUR Statement To Media, 9 October 2001.

British forces launched retaliatory strikes against Taliban and Al Queda targets in Afghanistan on 7 October 2001, and Belgium, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Spain and Turkey have all pledged military assistance, and some even ground forces.<sup>256</sup>

Additionally, NATO allies agreed on 4 October 2001 to take measures to “expand the options available in the campaign against terrorism.”<sup>257</sup> Of paramount importance to the Rice Proposal was the NAC’s decision to “backfill selected Allied assets in NATO’s area of responsibility that are required to directly support operations against terrorism.”<sup>258</sup> Some observers have construed this statement as, essentially, blanket permission for the United States to pull its troops from the Balkans for use in Afghanistan.<sup>259</sup>

The importance of the NATO alliance to the United States could also be called into question. According to German journalist Nikolas Busse,

This new harmony in transatlantic ties may...soon give way to a much more sober appraisal. Once the first battles against terrorism have been fought in Afghanistan and elsewhere, the Europeans may swiftly discover that U.S. security interests have shifted. That will affect NATO first and foremost. Even before the attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, Washington was showing more interest in Asia than in Europe. That interest now seems likely to be joined by greater concern with the Middle East and with terrorism all over the world. The defense of Europe, still officially one of NATO’s main purposes, will slip another few places further down in the list of U.S. priorities. In the war against international terrorism and their modern methods of organization, the United States will collaborate with many governments. Its European allies will be just some of many possible partners.<sup>260</sup>

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<http://www.nato.int/docu/speech/2001/s011010a.htm>

<sup>256</sup> Steven Mufson and Alan Sipress, “U.S. Gains Allies’ Support; Nations Willing To Commit Forces,” *The Washington Post*, 8 October 2001, p. 1.

<sup>257</sup> Statement to the Press by NATO Secretary General Lord Robertson on the North Atlantic Council Decision On Implementation of Article 5 of the Washington Treaty following the 11 September Attacks Against the United States, 4 October 2001. <http://www.nato.int/docu/speech/2001/s011004b.htm>

<sup>258</sup> Ibid.

<sup>259</sup> Suzanne Daley, “NATO Quickly Gives The U.S. All The Help That It Asked,” *The New York Times*, 5 October 2001.

<sup>260</sup> Nikolas Busse, “New Thinking For The Old World,” *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 3 October 2001.

Retaliation for the terrorist attacks is an issue of extreme importance to Americans, shocked by the terrorists' audacity and angered by the murder of so many innocent fellow citizens. Foreign policy was not considered important during the 2000 presidential election, but now Americans are eager to exact justice and revenge. According to a 7 October 2001 ABC-*Washington Post* poll, 94% of Americans support military action against Afghanistan, with 80% extending that support to the use of U.S. ground forces.<sup>261</sup> With such strong support for action, it is quite possible that the Atlantic Alliance could dwindle in the eyes of an American public that has not been interested in European security issues since the end of the Cold War.

The terrorist attacks have also enhanced the importance of missile defense. While the attacks in New York and Arlington did not utilize missiles, they have renewed interest in homeland defense, in which missile defense plays a large part. President Bush created a new cabinet-level Office of Homeland Security, whose head, former Pennsylvania governor Tom Ridge, was sworn in on 8 October 2001.<sup>262</sup> Americans felt very insecure in the wake of the attacks, and missile defense, already an issue of great importance to the Bush administration, began to receive even more attention. As a result, it is likely that the support of the European allies will not be seen as an important consideration in the continued pursuit of missile defense capabilities.

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<sup>261</sup> Richard Morin and Claudia Deane, "Public Support Is Overwhelming," *Washington Post*, 8 October 2001, p. 5.

<sup>262</sup> Elizabeth Becker and Elaine Sciolino, "Director Of Homeland Security Sworn In," *The Monterey County Herald*, 9 October 2001, p. A5.

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## V. ANALYSIS

This chapter attempts to assess the impact of the domestic and international factors on the fate of the Rice Proposal. It surveys the domestic factors that brought the proposal to light, and considers the international factors that likely caused its near-demise. It then reviews the impact of the 11 September 2001 terrorist attacks on the United States, and assesses their implications for the possible renewal of the Rice Proposal.

### A. PRESIDENT BUSH IN KOSOVO

On 24 July 2001, President Bush went to Kosovo. At Camp Bondsteel, he met with troops, signed a defense spending bill, and told soldiers there that his goal was “to hasten the day when peace is self-sustaining, when local democratically elected authorities can assume full responsibility and when NATO forces can go home.”<sup>263</sup> While these words might seem to be in line with the spirit of the Rice Proposal, they are not. President Bush did not single out U.S. forces, but discussed them as part of a NATO force that will remain in the Balkans until peace is “self-sustaining.” There have been important steps towards peace in the region, but it is far from peaceful. President Bush went on to say,

We understand that America’s contribution is essential, both militarily and politically. We will not draw down our forces in Bosnia and Kosovo precipitously or unilaterally. We came in together, and we will go out together.<sup>264</sup>

Bush again urged the European NATO allies to shoulder more of the peacekeeping burden, but his statements signaled a commitment to keeping U.S. troops in the Balkans for quite some time.

These words from President Bush came just a month after Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld said that KFOR and SFOR troops provided a “very valuable

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<sup>263</sup> President Bush quoted in Ron Hutchison, “Bush Visits Troops In Kosovo,” *The Monterey County Herald*, 25 July 2001, p. A2.

<sup>264</sup> President Bush quoted in Bill Sammon, “Bush Asks Europe To Boost Balkans Peacekeeping Role,” *The Washington Times*, 25 July 2001, p. 1.

contribution” to stability in the Balkans.<sup>265</sup> These statements, in conjunction with continued assurances by Secretary of State Colin Powell, gave the impression of an administration in agreement; and the Rice Proposal appeared to be dead. Operation *Essential Harvest* provided a possible blue print for future peace support operations in Europe—with European troops on the ground in Macedonia and U.S. forces supplying intelligence and logistics support—but the complete withdrawal of U.S. ground forces from peacekeeping operations in the Balkans seemed an unlikely prospect, at least until 11 September 2001.

## **B. DOMESTIC IMPETUS**

This is not surprising, given how the proposal came into being. Domestic factors caused the articulation of the Rice Proposal, beginning with the 2000 presidential debates. It had long been a Republican view that the Clinton administration had undermined military readiness by sending U.S. troops all over the globe for peacekeeping missions. In fact, the 2000 Republican National Platform stated,

In the last eight years the administration has squandered the opportunity granted to the United States by the courage and sacrifice of previous generations.... The administration has run America’s defenses down over the decade through inadequate resources, promiscuous commitments, and the absence of a forward-looking strategy.<sup>266</sup>

Additionally, the Republican-led 106<sup>th</sup> Congress stated in a summary of its accomplishments,

While the Congress last year addressed critical problems with recruitment and retention, this year’s annual defense bill offers solutions to serious readiness and quality-of-life issues that have plagued our military under the Clinton-Gore years.<sup>267</sup>

With such a history of opposition to peacekeeping commitments among Republicans, the Rice Proposal was not an entirely new concept. However, its elucidation appears to have been a response to an apparent misstatement by Governor

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<sup>265</sup> Donald Rumsfeld quoted in “Rumsfeld Calls Balkans Peacekeeping A ‘Very Valuable Contribution,’” *Periscope Daily Defense News*, 6 June 2001.

<sup>266</sup> From the Republican National Platform as reproduced by The Republican Party of New Mexico. <http://www.gopnm.org/platforms/2000platform8.html>

<sup>267</sup> “A Summary of Accomplishments of the 106<sup>th</sup> Congress,” U.S. Senate Republican Policy Committee, 18 December 2000. <http://www.senate.gov/~rpc/releases/1999/rc110200.htm>



Bush during the 12 October 2000 presidential debate. When Governor Bush said that it ought to be “one of our priorities with our European friends to convince them to put troops on the ground,” it sounded as if he had no idea that European allies supplied four-fifths of the peacekeeping troops in the Balkans.<sup>268</sup> It seems likely that the Rice Proposal came about as a way to remedy that, with Condoleezza Rice assuming the role of explaining exactly what the Governor meant to say. The Rice Proposal could have been simply an ad hoc way of attempting to illustrate that the possible misstatement was actually part of a well thought-out plan. If this was indeed the case, it should be no surprise that the Rice Proposal was not fully implemented as policy.

Domestic election politics may have also played a role in the Rice Proposal’s genesis. At the time of the proposal, Governor Bush and Vice President Gore were neck-and-neck in the polls (Governor Bush was barely ahead of Vice President Gore, 44% to 42%).<sup>269</sup> Despite this overall deadlock, it was reported in October 2000 that “Bush’s support in the Midwest, a key electoral battleground, has eroded sharply. Gore now leads Bush in that vote-rich area by a 43%-38% margin.”<sup>270</sup> According to *The Times* of London, this poll shift likely prompted the Rice Proposal:

Mr. Bush is playing to the American Midwest where, unusually, this race will be won or lost. He has sought to turn Mr. Gore’s internationalist case that the US cannot evade its responsibilities as a superpower into a potential vote-loser.<sup>271</sup>

### C. DOMESTIC APATHY

Governor Bush’s calls to bring home troops from such a faraway, little-known place to their families might have gained him some ground in the Midwest, but Americans in general were not that interested. In fact, foreign policy is simply not important to most American voters. According to Eric Black,

the end of the Cold War knocked foreign policy from the top rank of presidential campaign issues.... In polls, domestic issues such as

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<sup>268</sup> Governor Bush quoted in “Bush Telegraph,” *The Times (London)*, 23 October 2000.

<sup>269</sup> “Bush Rides Foreign Policy Into Lead, But Gore Rallying In Pivotal Midwest,” *Investor’s Business Daily*, 17 October 2000. <http://www.tipponline.com/articles/00/ibd/i101700.htm>

<sup>270</sup> Ibid.

<sup>271</sup> “Bush Telegraph.”

education, health care, taxes, entitlement reform and the country's moral condition all rank higher on voters' list of concerns.<sup>272</sup>

A 12 March 2000 Gallup poll confirmed this; it found that foreign affairs ranked eleventh in importance to Americans, behind issues such as education, ethics, crime, taxes, social security, health care and drugs.<sup>273</sup> Closer to the presidential election, a 26 July 2000 Gallup poll found that only 58% of Americans felt that foreign policy was either "extremely important" or "very important," compared with 89% for education, 86% for the economy, 84% for health care and 82% for social security.<sup>274</sup> Foreign policy gets some media airtime during presidential campaigns, but the domestic issues that can affect people directly are usually of higher importance to voters.

Because of this tendency, continued U.S. troop participation in peacekeeping missions in the Balkans can be seen as yet another example of continuity in foreign policy. Johanna McGeary writes that

every administration learns—often the hard way—that foreign policy inevitably snaps back from the campaign rhetoric to the well-plowed tracks of enduring interests.<sup>275</sup>

Such a shift from rhetoric to reality occurred during the ascension to power of President Clinton. On the campaign trail, Governor Clinton said that he would not return fleeing Haitians to their troubled country as long as it was ruled by a military dictatorship. Once he was in office, however, the possibility of hundreds of thousands of Haitian refugees forced him to reconsider his position, and he continued with President Bush's policy of returning refugees.<sup>276</sup> With regard to the Balkans, Governor Clinton criticized the Bush administration's inaction in the face of "the deliberate and systematic extermination" of

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<sup>272</sup> Eric Black, "Seeking Foreign Policy Discussions—And Differences," *Minneapolis Star Tribune*, 4 May 2000, p. 18A.

<sup>273</sup> Frank Newport, "Economy, Education, Health, Crime and Morality Most On Americans' Minds This Election Year," *Gallup News Service*, 22 June 2000.  
<http://www.gallup.com/poll/releases/pr000622b.asp>

<sup>274</sup> Jeffrey M. Jones, "Being Number One Militarily Is Important To Americans, But Defense Not Among Most Important Issues In Election," *Gallup News Service*, 27 September 2000.  
<http://www.gallup.com/poll/releases/pr000927.asp>

<sup>275</sup> Johanna McGeary, "Odd Man Out," *Time*, 10 September 2001.

<sup>276</sup> Robin Wright, "Global Realities Reshaping Bush Foreign Policy Vision," *The Los Angeles Times*, 11 March 2001.

the Bosniaks, and vowed that he would call in air strikes to stop Serb aggression.<sup>277</sup> As president, however, he followed his predecessor's policy until 1995. According to Robin Wright,

Foreign policy is traditionally the area in which the least change occurs from one administration to another. 'Every new administration comes in and wants to review policy and take a fresh look and come to its own conclusions. But the reality that they ultimately confront is that U.S. interests don't change and the constraints don't change, and therefore you're often working within a narrower band of options than it looks from the outside,' said Samuel 'Sandy' Berger, Clinton's national security adviser.<sup>278</sup>

Despite campaign rhetoric, the realities of the international arena, combined with domestic voter apathy, often result in continuity in foreign policy.

#### **D. INTERNATIONAL REALITIES**

In the case of the Rice Proposal, international realities assailed the Bush camp immediately following the 21 October 2000 *New York Times* interview. European leaders and journalists were aghast at the prospect of a U.S. troop withdrawal, especially considering the relative size of the U.S. contingent. So worried were they that Lord Robertson, NATO's Secretary General, felt compelled to call the Bush campaign headquarters to verify that U.S. troops would not be immediately pulled out under a Bush administration.<sup>279</sup> It seems likely that Governor Bush and his aides were not prepared for the torrent of negative response to the proposal, and it also appears that they had not fully considered its impact on the NATO alliance. After the initial response to the proposal, Governor Bush's advisers did a lot of explaining and reassuring, and the Bush administration worked hard to demonstrate that the United States would be a reliable ally. When President-elect Bush announced his selection of Colin Powell as Secretary of State, he said that his foreign policy would be guided by six principles, and the first was "working with allies in Europe and the Far East to extend peace."<sup>280</sup> On 18 December

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<sup>277</sup> Bill Clinton quoted in Mark Danner, "America and the Bosnia Genocide," *The New York Review of Books*, 4 December 1997, p. 58.

<sup>278</sup> Wright.

<sup>279</sup> Michael R. Gordon, "NATO Chief Says Bush Aide Reassured Him On Balkan Stance," *The New York Times*, 1 November 2000.

<sup>280</sup> Bush quoted in Robin Wright and Edwin Chen, "The Presidential Transition," *The Los Angeles*

2000, Condoleezza Rice said in an ABC interview, “Bush is the man who believes that overtaken obligations must be respected.”<sup>281</sup>

This emphasis on alliances and obligations continued through July 2001, when Secretary of State Powell said,

We will do everything that’s necessary to make sure that our alliances remain strong and vibrant. We’re going to be very, very involved on the world stage and playing the role that is expected of the United States.<sup>282</sup>

Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld echoed this sentiment: “Alliances are very important to the United States. We recognize as a country the importance of these linkages.”<sup>283</sup> In order to prove that the administration recognizes the importance of alliances, and of NATO in particular, U.S. ground troops simply had to remain active in peacekeeping missions in the Balkans.

#### **E. MISSILE DEFENSE**

At least until 11 September 2001, it could be argued, a significant reason for continued U.S. ground force participation in Balkan peacekeeping missions was the issue of missile defense. As a journalist pointed out in early September 2001, “In a way not anticipated before the election, national missile defense lies at the heart of Bush’s conception of the world and that of his many like-minded advisers.”<sup>284</sup> Missile defense was one of many issues during the presidential campaign, but during the period prior to 11 September 2001, it appeared to have become President Bush’s “one cherished foreign policy.

“It comes directly from the President,” says a State official. “He’s asking every day, ‘How’s it going? What progress is there?’ It colors everything else in the...portfolio.”<sup>285</sup>

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*Times*, 17 December 2000, p. A1.

<sup>281</sup> Condoleezza Rice quoted in “New Administration To Respect Its Obligations At Balkans: Rice,” ONASA News Agency, 19 December 2000.

<sup>282</sup> Secretary of State Colin Powell quoted in Robin Wright, “Officials Deny U.S. Is Going It Alone,” *The Los Angeles Times*, 31 July 2001, p. 1.

<sup>283</sup> Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld quoted in *Ibid.*

<sup>284</sup> McGeary.

<sup>285</sup> *Ibid.*

The newly published Quadrennial Defense Review, delivered to Congress at the end of Fiscal Year 2001, gives Homeland Defense the most emphasis. “The highest priority of the U.S. military is to defend the Nation from all enemies.”<sup>286</sup>

For the Bush administration, this priority includes missile defense as the entering argument. Many European experts and officials were frightened by this devotion to missile defense, however, and they questioned its compatibility with America’s commitment to its allies. To allay these fears, the administration said it would include U.S. allies and security partners under the shield as well as all areas where U.S. troops are stationed.<sup>287</sup> It also promised to “come out together” from the Balkans. The Rice Proposal appeared to have been abandoned to soothe allies and pave the way for agreement on missile defense.

#### **F. VIOLENCE IN THE BALKANS**

A final factor in the apparent demise of the Rice Proposal was the escalation of ethnic violence in the Balkans. While the Rice Proposal might have been a possibility in October 2000, when violence was moderate, by February 2001, “The crisis in Macedonia...compelled the administration to accelerate reconsideration of its Balkan policies.”<sup>288</sup> The rising tide of violence between ethnic Albanian nationalists and Macedonian forces led to clashes between guerrillas and KFOR troops, as they tried to stop arms and personnel from crossing the Kosovo-Macedonia border.<sup>289</sup> In addition to the more acute military necessity, American credibility in negotiations also came into demand.

The Albanians believe that only Western diplomatic intervention can salvage an agreement, placing their trust in the Americans while privately

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<sup>286</sup> Quadrennial Defense Review Report, 30 September 2001, p. 18.  
<http://www.defenselink.mil/pubs/qdr2001.pdf>

<sup>287</sup> Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld comments delivered at the Munich Conference on European Security Policy, 3 February 2001. <http://www.defenselink.mil/speeches/2001/s20010203-secdef.html>

<sup>288</sup> James R. Hooper, Managing Director of the Public International Law and Policy Group, testimony before a hearing of the Subcommittee on Europe of the House International Relations Committee, 11 July 2001.

<sup>289</sup> “Kosovo’s Reality Defeats U.S. Campaign Promise,” *The St Petersburg Times*, 13 March 2001.

disparaging the EU as anti-Albanian.<sup>290</sup>

During his visit to Camp Bondsteel in July 2001, President Bush acknowledged that the violence in the Balkans was not over: “Ethnic extremists are still stoking the flames of intolerance and inciting violence.”<sup>291</sup> While the Rice Proposal apparently came about as a result of domestic politics, the violence in the Balkans, coupled with U.S. voter apathy, and pressures within the NATO alliance, especially in the context of the Bush administration’s missile defense ambitions, sounded its death knell—until 11 September 2001.

#### **G. POSSIBLE EFFECTS OF THE 11 SEPTEMBER 2001 TERRORIST ATTACKS**

The unprecedented attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon galvanized U.S. public opinion and garnered near-universal support for the Bush administration’s political-military response, opening a new door for the rebirth of the Rice Proposal. Prior to the attacks, a U.S. withdrawal from ground force responsibilities in the peacekeeping missions in the Balkans seemed militarily and politically impractical; but in the midst of a global war on terrorism, such a withdrawal seems imminent. The troops in the Balkans may be likely candidates for redeployment to Southwest Asia: they are closer to the region than troops in North America; and they are eminently qualified by their “nation-building” experiences in the Balkans to help rebuild Afghanistan in the event of a collapse of the Taliban government. The NATO allies of the United States have pledged to “backfill selected Allied assets in NATO’s area of responsibility that are required to directly support operations against terrorism,”<sup>292</sup> a statement interpreted by many to indicate that NATO allies will replace any U.S. troops that are redeployed from the Balkans.

Despite this support, some observers in Europe fear that the size of the coalition being formed against terrorism, and the resources that the Bush administration has been

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<sup>290</sup> James R. Hooper.

<sup>291</sup> President Bush quoted in David E. Sanger, “In Kosovo, Bush Tells U.S. Troops Role Is Crucial,” *The New York Times*, 25 July 2001, p. 1.

<sup>292</sup> Statement to the Press by NATO Secretary General Lord Robertson on the North Atlantic Council Decision On Implementation of Article 5 of the Washington Treaty following the 11 September Attacks Against the United States, 4 October 2001. <http://www.nato.int/docu/speech/2001/s011004b.htm>

dedicating to the war on terrorism could undermine the importance of the NATO alliance. The terrorist attacks and their consequences have taken the top position in world news, making violence in the Balkans seem a secondary matter at best. The United States public is eager to respond to the homeland defense challenge, paving the way for rapid development of missile defense systems regardless of international support. As the first six months of the Bush administration showed, there are many compelling reasons for the United States to continue its ground force presence in the Balkans. The 11 September 2001 terrorist attacks, however, have created compelling reasons to consider dedicating these forces to other purposes. While U.S. troops have not yet been taken from the Balkans for operations in Afghanistan, it is quite possible that it is only a matter of time.

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## VI. CONCLUSION

This thesis has analyzed the Rice Proposal. Apparently articulated as a rapid response to Governor George W. Bush's evident misstatements during the 2000 Presidential campaign, the Rice Proposal called for the withdrawal of U.S. ground forces from peacekeeping missions in the Balkans; it argued that America's European allies should assume a greater share of the ground force peacekeeping role. This proposal did not come out of the blue; it was representative of a largely Republican dissatisfaction with the activism of the Clinton-Gore years and conviction that U.S. military readiness had been reduced by participation in such missions. This proposal might have been popular with Americans wary of long term peacekeeping commitments—especially in such a remote location as the Balkans—but America's European allies in NATO were quite concerned.

The end of the Cold War destroyed the bipolar world in which NATO existed from 1949 to 1989, and the 1990's saw NATO seek new roles that would continue its relevance into the post-Cold War world. One of these new roles has been acting on a selective and ad hoc basis in support of collective security in Europe, and NATO's forays into this realm have centered on the Balkans. NATO's initial efforts in 1992-1995 were limited to activities such as no-fly-zone and embargo enforcement. With American leadership in Operation Deliberate Force (1995) and Operation Allied Force (1999), NATO forces were vital to the cessation of hostilities in both Bosnia and Kosovo. NATO has subsequently led the peacekeeping forces in both of those regions. In European eyes, the Rice Proposal threatened the future of these peacekeeping missions, and therefore threatened European security. European NATO allies also have provided about four-fifths of the troops in the Balkans, and have viewed the U.S. contribution as relatively small in size and cost. For these reasons, and because NATO's political cohesion is based on risk sharing, the European response to the Rice Proposal was immediate and negative.

Because of that response, the Bush campaign team almost immediately stepped away from the proposal, telling the NATO Secretary General that there would be no

unilateral withdrawal of U.S. ground forces. Governor Bush's advisers continued to voice soothing messages that continued after Bush became the U.S. president. The Bush administration was persistent in explaining that it wanted to reduce the number of U.S. ground troops in the Balkans, but it was equally persistent in promising that any such reductions would occur on the basis of consultations with allies. This willingness to work with allies became even more prominent as violence resurged in the Balkans, notably in Macedonia.

Cooperation with allies became a key tenet of the Bush administration as its priorities emerged—with missile defense right at the top. In an effort to allay European fears, President Bush personally told U.S. troops in Kosovo that their presence in the Balkans was politically and militarily necessary, and that they would remain there for some time. The importance of the NATO alliance, President Bush's policy priorities, the comparatively small size of the U.S. ground force presence in the Balkans, and domestic apathy regarding foreign relations had combined by July 2001 to stop the Rice Proposal from becoming a reality.

The events of 11 September 2001 served to change perceptions of that combination of factors, however. The period following the terrorist attacks has seen an angry American population eager to respond, an American president willing to go to great lengths to obtain justice, and NATO allies that are apparently willing to acquiesce if the U.S. response requires the redeployment of U.S. peacekeepers from the Balkans. In such circumstances, the resurrection of the Rice Proposal seems quite likely, especially for an administration that was eager to remove U.S. troops from the Balkans to begin with. A case could easily be made for an immediate withdrawal of U.S. ground forces from peacekeeping in the Balkans. Such a case, however, should not be made.

The 11 September terrorist attacks were horrible and atrocious, and they demand the response of Operation Enduring Freedom. However, except for the abrupt demise of U.S. public apathy about international policies, the terrorist attacks have changed none of the factors that have in recent weeks compelled the United States to continue its ground force presence in the Balkans. The fact remains that the U.S. contingent is still relatively small in terms of both personnel and cost. NATO is still an extremely important alliance—the most successful and enduring military alliance in history, and one based on

the interests and values shared by the United States and its allies in Europe and North America. NATO will not function well as an alliance without U.S. leadership, and the United States cannot lead if it does not have troops on the ground, sharing risks with the other allies.

Most Americans still know little about the Balkans, and unless U.S. forces in the Balkans begin taking serious casualties, they are unlikely to voice any strong opinions about keeping or withdrawing troops. The Balkans are nonetheless still vital to NATO's identity and to European stability. The Balkans are still unstable, and therefore the future of European stability remains in question. In October 2001, Major General H Steven Blum, commander of the 29<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division of the Virginia Army National Guard and head of NATO forces in the northeast sector of Bosnia, offer the following judgment: "Until you re-establish rule of law here, you can't reduce the military presence.... Leaving now would be like quitting after 25 miles of a marathon race."<sup>293</sup>

NATO allies were among the very first nations to voice support for America after the terrorist attacks, and the North Atlantic Council promptly invoked Article 5 of the Washington Treaty. NATO allies have agreed to a set of measures in support of the U.S.-led campaign against terrorism, and some have already supplied air and naval assets to assist American forces. The solidarity of NATO allies has reinforced the bonds built over the previous fifty years. It must also be noted that the European Union is comparable in economic weight to the United States, and that, despite the fact that not all NATO members are also members of the EU, American engagement in the NATO alliance helps Europe and the United States work together rather than against each other.

America is at war and intends to defeat terrorism. Thousands of troops are deploying and thousands of reservists are being called up to active duty. The U.S. forces on the ground in the Balkans are *not* vital to the war against the Al Queda terrorist network and the Taliban regime in Afghanistan, but they are vital to European security and to NATO's political cohesion. For these reasons, they should remain on duty in peacekeeping operations in the Balkans.

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<sup>293</sup> Major General H Steven Blum quoted in James Dao, "Americans Plead to Remain in Bosnia," *The New York Times*, 22 October 2001.

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